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SCENIC SIEGES AND BATTLEFIELDS OF FRENCH CANADA



KATHARINE LIVINGSTONE
MACPHERSON

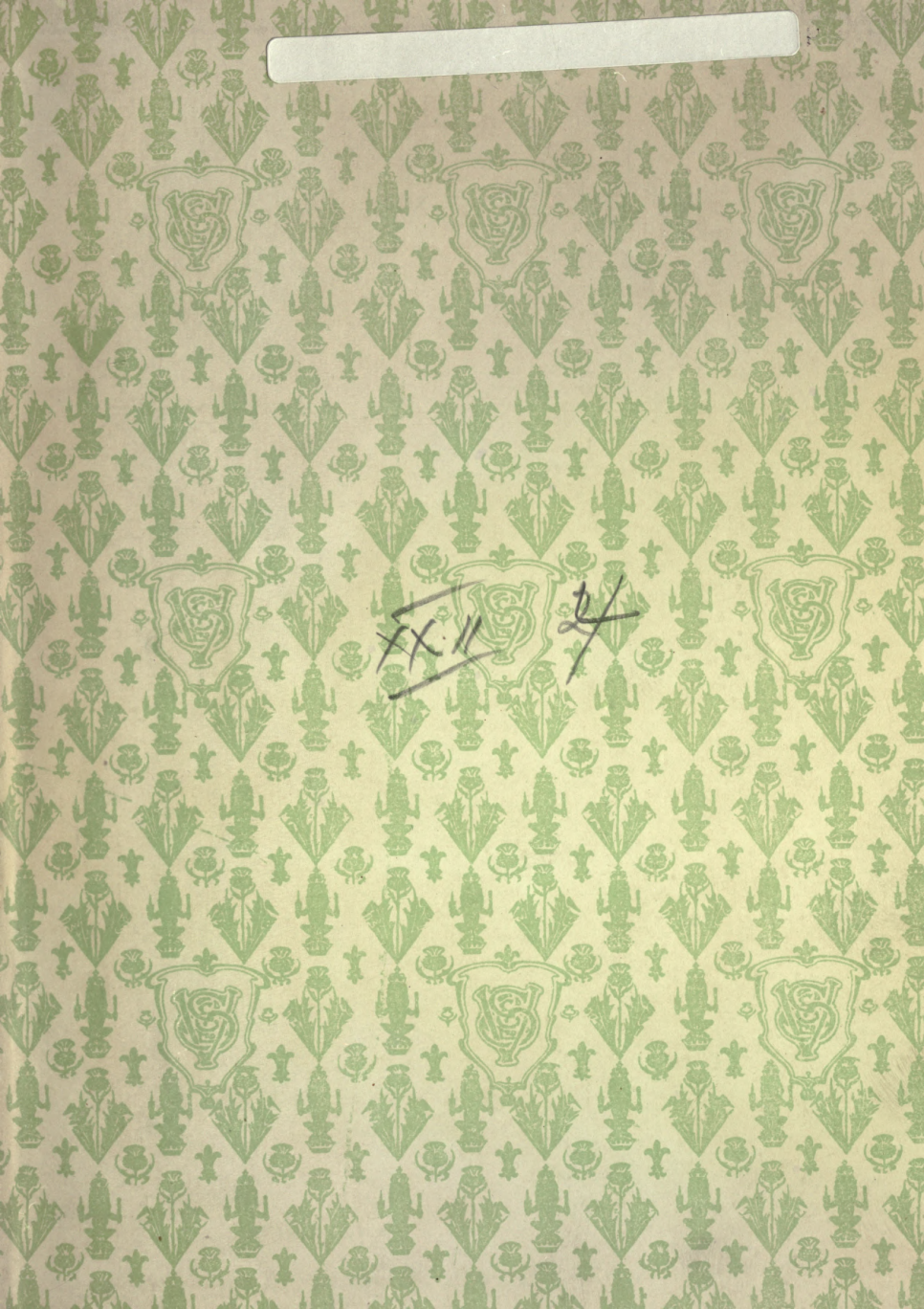


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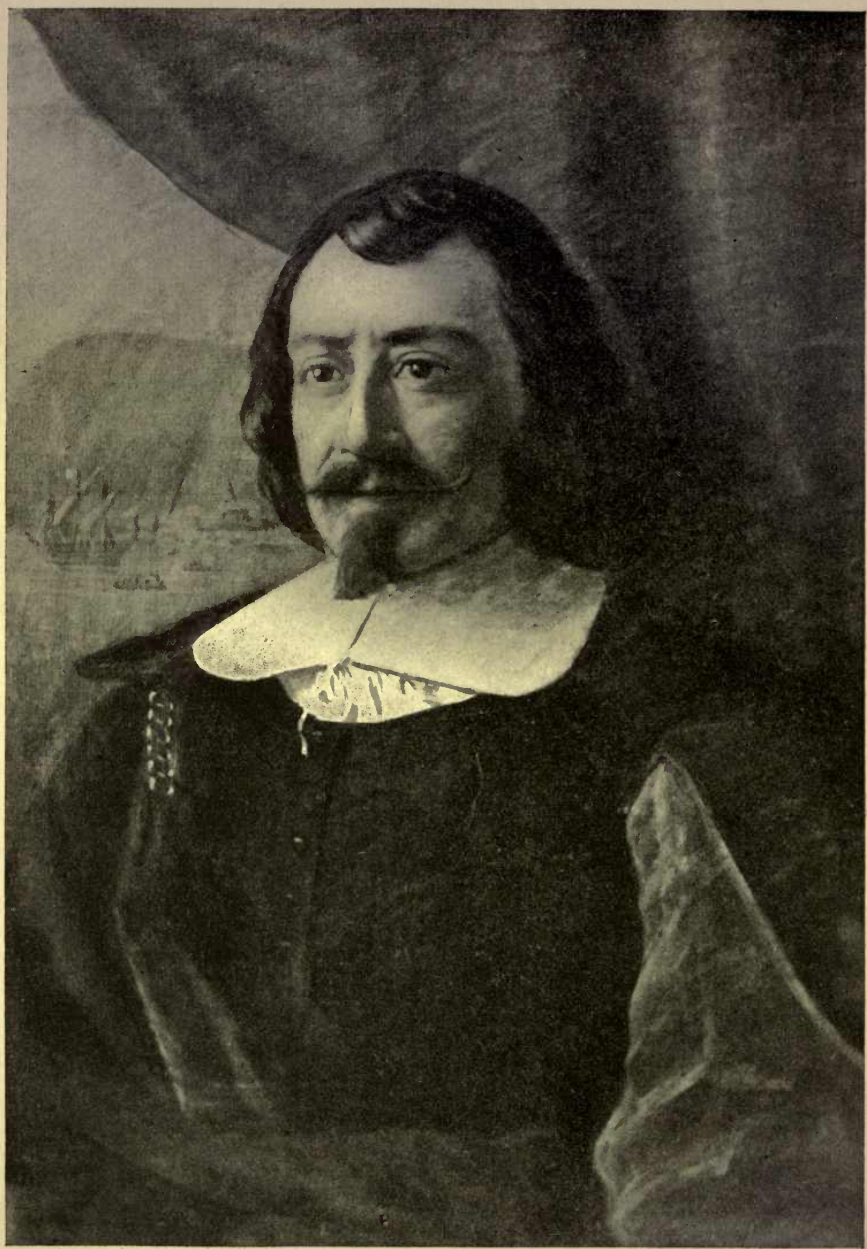


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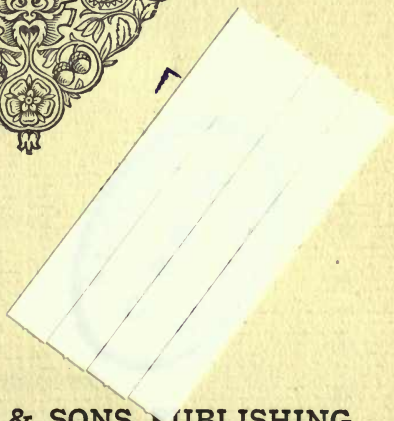
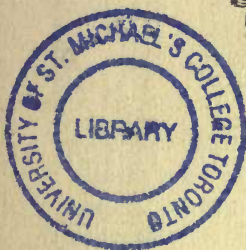


SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN

SCENIC SIEGES AND BATTLEFIELDS OF FRENCH CANADA

BY

KATHARINE LIVINGSTONE MACPHERSON



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ACA NADA

Tradition suggests an origin for the name Canada in the two Spanish words *Aca Nada*, signifying "nothing here," used by the earliest navigators when disappointed in their hope of finding gold.

Long ago a band of seamen
Left behind the coast of Spain,
Drove their craft through gale and spindrift,
Sailed the storm-swept, trackless main;
Sternly sought an Eldorado
Where the northern cliffs uprear,
Fondly hailing Hope's bright vision
Gold the only guerdon dear . . .
Reckless flung a tropic halyard,
"*Aca Nada!*" nothing here.

Nothing here, my Canada!
Nay, but we are wiser grown;
Stretching vast from dawn to sunset
With a grandeur all thine own!

Rugged mountains, where the eagle
Wheels in widening circles slow;
Mighty hills, whose peaked summits,
Covered with eternal snow,
Stand like angel sentinels guarding
Far and wide the land below!

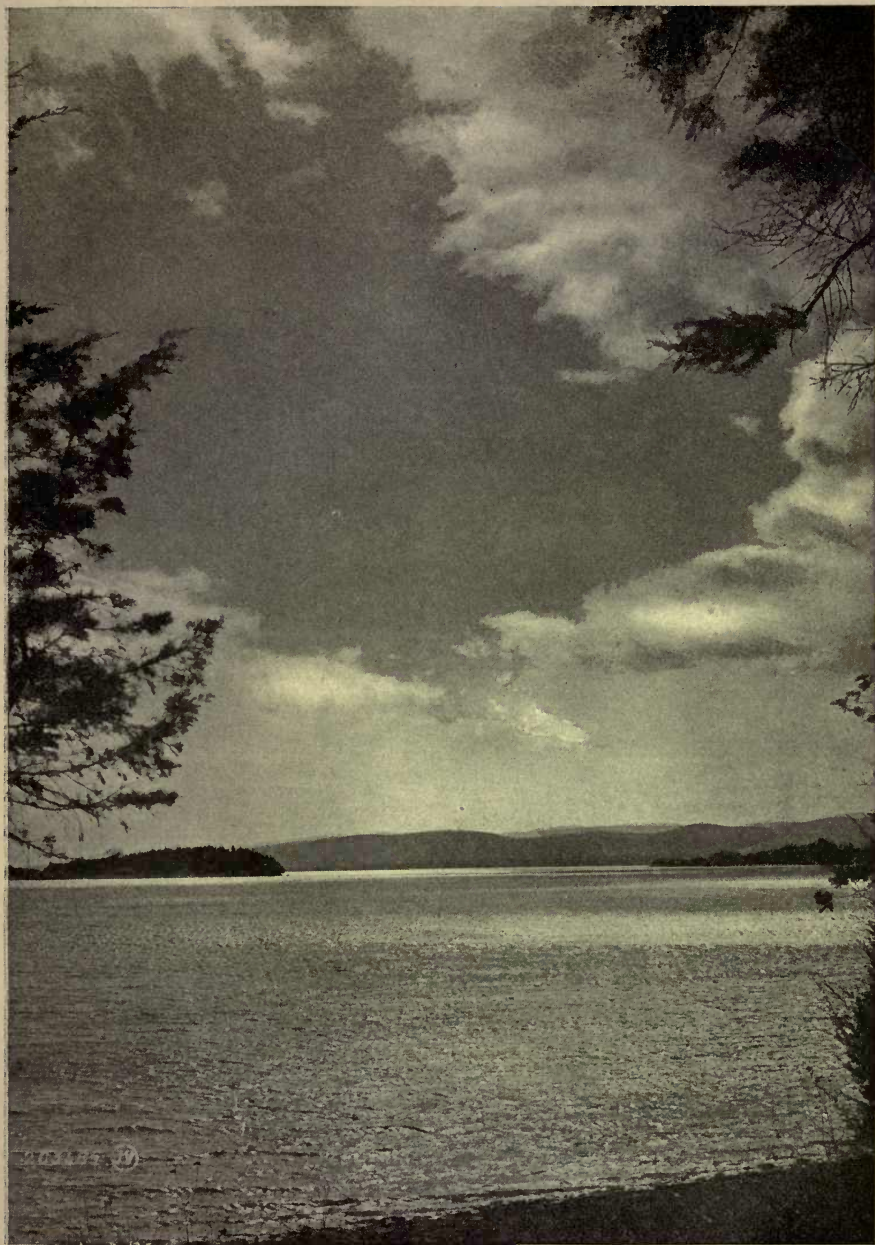
Trackless forests, dark and lonely,
Where man's foot hath never trod;
Howls the wolf, and screams the panther,
Face to face with Nature's God!
Here the haughty stag advancing,
Kingly power undaunted sways;
Here the timid hare bounds fearless
Through the brushwood underways;
In his native marsh the heron
Seeks the waters of his love,
While in geometric figure
Sail the wild-duck far above.
Company of man disturbs not,
All in careless freedom rove!

Lakes and streamlets ever changing,
Yet in beauty changeless still
As when first Old Night and Chaos
Bent obedient to His will!

Stately rivers, onward rolling
Ever to the restless sea,
On thine azure bosoms heaving,
White-winged barques ride peacefully,
Laden low with trophies golden
Of sweet Ceres' husbandry.

Where of yore, by tideless waters,
Pines their solemn shadows threw,
Curls the graceful smoke from homesteads,
Men their thrifty lives pursue.
Where in bygone years the forest
Shuddered to the tempest's roar,
Spreads now many a stately city,
Solitude returns no more!
Happy country, happy people,
Peace prevails from shore to shore!

Think what thy storied past hath been,
Thy guarded, ancient lore,
The deeds thy former years have seen,
Remembered evermore!
For thee, a babe of nations,
The best of blood was spilt,
And firmly thy foundations
On heroes' bones were built.



MOONLIGHT ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

The Renunciation of Dollard des Ormeaux



THE year was 1660, and the scene New France, that land of immense rivers and vast primitive forests, that after repeated and heroic failures had at last been successfully colonised some fifty years previously by Champlain.

The entire population at this time numbered not more than three thousand, and the only settlements worthy of the name of town were Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal, then called Ville-Marie. Of these only the first could in any sense be considered fortified, dominated as it was by the old Fort St. Louis, high on the edge of the cliff, from the battlements of which the *fleur-de-lis* of France waved in the breeze. Three Rivers was merely a palisaded post surrounded by a small collection of log houses, a noted rendezvous for white men and savages from four directions—the vast lonely north, the

Upper and the Lower St. Lawrence, and the Iroquois country, by way of Lake Champlain and the River Richelieu. Montreal consisted of some forty small compact houses, running parallel at some little distance to the river. On the left of the line was situated a fort of masonry, and on the rising ground to the right a substantial stone windmill, enclosed by a wall or palisade, loopholed for musketry, which answered the purposes of a second fortification. Round about for some distance stretched fields, as yet very imperfectly cleared, among whose charred and decaying stumps were annually reaped luxuriant harvests, for climate and soil had already proved themselves admirable producers. In the background from east to west extended a deep ravine, through which ran a gurgling stream, and above all, like a couchant lion, rose Jacques Cartier's Mont Royale, covered to its summit with impenetrable forest.

All the recent news from their beloved mother country had tended to fill the hearts of the settlers with joy, for at last there was peace throughout Europe, and every subject of His Most Christian Majesty basked in the triumphs and virtues of their invincible monarch.

Very different, however, were affairs in Canada.

Here everything had pointed to the success of the colonists, their speedy increase in riches and love for their new country; but there was a drawback. For some years the cloud on the horizon had been assuming a dangerous aspect, enlarging with a swiftness and gloom that seemed to predict nothing less than absolute ruin. The trouble was the increasing animosity towards the newcomers on the part of the cruel and treacherous Iroquois, "whose thousand promises of peace, with oaths as solemn as can be expected from a barbarous nation," were broken whenever it suited them to do so, to the pitiable misery of their helpless victims. The celebrated Iroquois nation was composed of five tribes—Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas—and though at one time they had been numerically strong, a generation or two of incessant fighting with all their neighbours had reduced them to a mere handful. Their misfortunes, however, had not made them any the less haughty or overbearing, though they could be gracious on occasion, and now their intelligent use of firearms, procured in trading with the Dutch of the Hudson, had given a turn to the wheel of fortune that bid fair to bestow upon them a sovereign power that they had

never yet possessed. Already they had almost succeeded in wiping out their hereditary enemies, the Algonquins and Hurons, and the remnants of these tribes, always friendly to the French, and now painfully claiming their protection, was undoubtedly at the root of their revengeful rage.

According to the testimony of the early Jesuit missionaries, who were trying, with considerable success, to spread the Christian religion, better medical knowledge, and civilisation among the Indians at large, the Iroquois had frequently proved themselves valiant warriors, performing deeds that would have distinguished the most courageous European nations, though trickery and falsehood were common, and cruelty commonest of all. Their methods, described by those who had suffered from them, were terrorising, though it may be said that they inflicted on others no more than they could endure with stoicism themselves. "So stealthy in their approach, so swift in their execution, and so expeditious in their retreat, that one commonly learns of their departure before being aware of their arrival." Like foxes they threaded their way through the mazes of the forests, every part of which was familiar, like lions made the attack, often meeting with little resistance, and

like birds took flight after accomplishing their designs. A practice thoroughly enjoyed among them was to lie hidden all day in the edge of a clearing, watching a farmer, in ignorance of their proximity, tilling his land, and when tired of this diversion, silently approaching from behind to cleave his head open with one swift stroke of the tomahawk. In circling about dwellings during the night, also, and hiding behind shrubs and bushes, they held the wakeful inmates in fear too great for words. Such appearances always foreshadowed seizure and scalping in the morning among the wretched colonists.

This terror was surely frightful enough even in the settlements, where the small white populations could depend upon each other for assistance, but infinitely worse in the more scattered districts, where two or three farmhouses at most might be grouped together leagues away from their neighbours. There the *habitants* were absolutely at their mercy. When the Iroquois did not kill outright, they took prisoners — men sometimes, but always women and children when they had opportunity, at their lodges to be tortured and mutilated at caprice, with a cruelty that the good father narrator “has no ink black enough to de-

scribe," or to be held in slavery until death brought merciful release, for they were seldom heard of again. No treaty was sacred to them, and no argument that civilisation could use would make one binding. Scouring the country as they did and holding many peaceable tribes in apprehension, they had quenched the valued and kindly mission work of the French, butchering the missionaries, and for the time had almost put a stop to the fur and other trades. The wonder was, in such circumstances, that the savages, who could so easily have wiped out the meagre population, had not done so; and the handful of heroic colonists and their priests did not hesitate to attribute their continued safety to the merciful providence of God, upon whom they depended with child-like faith for the only comfort they had. The French government had been implored again and again to send a regiment or two to protect them, but had not done so; and during the winter of 1659-60, to their despair, it became known, through a Huron who had escaped from his Iroquois tormentors, that a descent of seven hundred warriors would take place in the spring, with the avowed object of exterminating the settlements.

At this crisis there appeared a hero whose name should rank with the noblest in history. Hitherto defence, and that but in a small way, had been the best that could be hoped for, but now, fully considering the means by which a few had held numbers in check, it was determined to carry war into the enemies' country and see what would result from it. Adam Dollard des Ormeaux was a man of good family, commandant of the garrison at Montreal. He was accomplished and capable, but lately arrived from France, and the condition of his unhappy countrymen had not failed to influence his generous mind to such a degree that there remained nothing for him but to give his life in an endeavour to mitigate their sufferings. Inspired by the indomitable pluck and perseverance of the young enthusiast, the whole community became less hopeless, and sixteen others like-minded with himself volunteered for the desperate adventure, pledging themselves neither to give nor accept quarter. The list was small for such an undertaking, though it must have made a large proportion of the youth of the settlement; and having asked and secured leave of de Maisonneuve, the governor, they set about their unique

preparations. They were all young, the three eldest twenty-eight, thirty, and thirty-one respectively, the rest ranging from twenty-one upwards, and their occupations those of soldiers, armourers, lock-smiths, lime-burners, &c., and settlers without trade. None were natives of the colony, nor had been away from France for more than seven years. With one consent each made his will, all of which are preserved among the notarial deeds of that year in Montreal; then, having disposed of temporal affairs, they turned their thoughts to more important matters. For the last time they solemnly knelt before the altar in the little Chapel of the Hôtel Dieu, now in the vigour and beauty of young manhood, to receive the sacrament for the dying. With blinding tears priest and friends witnessed the act of renunciation. When they arose it was to feel themselves filled with a spirit that leaves the impression of a crusade.

It was early spring, still cold, with ice and snow in heaps upon land and floating down with the current of the great river; but though influence was brought to defer it, their desire to set out could not be changed. Possibly they did not wish their enthusiasm to cool, or more likely, the movements of a large number of Iroquois

who had spent the winter on the Upper Ottawa, could not be relied on. It was better to strike without delay.

Meanwhile forty Huron Indians, the flower of the tribe, and a few Algonquins, who had been living for some time under the eye of the Quebec fortress, had gathered for the same purpose, and hearing of Dollard's intended departure, rapidly paddled up the current and joined forces, hoping soon to surprise the foe. In high spirits they proceeded, mostly at night, to avoid the lynx eye of any prowling brave, paying little heed to the penetrating cold, and making light of encounters with floating ice. Where rapids must be avoided they portaged, pushing and carrying their boats over rough ice and stones, and sometimes leaping into the intensely cold water to push them off. Never was known a forlorn hope more confident or devoted. Prayers, simple and soldier-like, were held night and morning, each addressing God in his own tongue, French, Huron, or Algonquin, and every one absolutely sure that he was receiving power to achieve from that source alone.

Following the shore beside the Lachine rapids, they took to the water again, and paddled swiftly up Lake St. Louis, soon to arrive at the western end of Montreal, where the great brown volume

of the Ottawa, pushing aside the blue St. Lawrence, divides into two streams, one passing on each side of the island, to meet again at Bout de l'Isle, and continue their united course to the ocean. Here, a turn to the right, and the passage of a few miles of swift current, brought them to their destination, not far from the foot of the Chaudière Falls, whose foaming torrent, pouring over rocky ledges and boulders, barred their onward course. A partially dismantled and unroofed fort stood near the spot, and of this they thankfully took possession, to await the painted and defeathered braves, whom they knew would soon appear along the adjacent path, returning from their winter's hunt.

They had not long to wait. Employed in strengthening the defences, they were soon perceived by scouts of the enemy, who hastened back to warn the tribe, and before they were ready, numbers of birch-bark canoes containing about two hundred warriors, some of whom were renegade Hurons, were seen, paddle in hand, steadily descending the turbulent current. Prepared for war, each dark athletic figure had its scalp-lock floating in the breeze, tomahawk in belt, and loaded musket ready at the bow. Cautiously approaching, and always under cover, sometimes

in mysterious silence, at others rending the air with their discordant war-whoops, they circled about for a time, taking in every detail of the surroundings, and at last attacked with characteristic fury. Happily the garrison was prepared, and the warriors were so warmly received that, after a sharp encounter, they were forced to retire with loss. One or two assaults repulsed in a similar manner, the besiegers resorted to their customary guile, approaching with a well-assumed air of frankness that had too often deceived the honest settlers in days gone by. To those who understood them, the pretence of a parley was merely a device to gain time, and indeed it was so now, for they had already despatched swift canoes to summon from the Richelieu Islands the tribe waiting to make descent upon the colonists. So reasonable, however, did the explanation of the envoys appear, that the Hurons in the fort were inclined to listen, but the white men, though consenting, prepared themselves for the inevitable. Not venturing to open the gate of the palisade, they stood upon a *banquette* of powder-kegs inside, and would have answered the eloquent harangue of their assailants over the top, but there was no time. Scarcely was the ceremonious discussion on one side of the

fort begun, when the other side was treacherously attacked by an all but overwhelming force. The truce ceased abruptly, and with great gallantry they were beaten off, and compelled to retreat again, infuriated that so small a number should venture to offer them resistance.

For some days this state of things continued, the allies within the fort supporting each other with desperate courage, hardly daring to snatch a few moments of sorely needed rest, and by turns keeping up the discharge of musketry night and day, for the fierce assaults from without were almost constant. Any relaxation was spent in prayer, whose terrible earnestness can scarcely be imagined. After one repulse of the Iroquois, every man would go down on his knees in humble gratitude to God, rising only to drive back their enemy again.

They suffered from hunger, but even more from thirst, the little supply of water being too soon exhausted, and amidst the heat and smoke, the pangs they endured soon became unbearable. At length, two of the number, half-delirious with thirst, seized a moment of respite, when the savages seemed somewhat scattered, and protected as well as possible by their companions' muskets, made a dash to



DOLLARD'S LAST STAND



FIGHT OF HABITANT AND IROQUOIS



IROQUOIS

the river-side, two hundred paces distant. With a promptitude that showed the vigilance of the besiegers, an instant hailstorm of lead whistled about their ears, and though a small supply of water was obtained, the terrible experiment was not repeated. Later, the heroic garrison, by digging within the palisades, endeavoured to relieve their tortures, but with little success. A tiny thread of muddy water resulted, it is true, but as the pitiful old record asserts, it was much less in quantity than the blood flowing from their veins.

In this way five days passed, and matters having reached a point beyond even the endurance of Indian stoicism, thirty of the Christian Hurons at length gave way to the repeated inducements of their faithless brothers outside, and making their exit with a rush, were seen no more. The Algonquins, to their honour, remained firm, and fought to the last.

But the awful experience of the self-devoted few had not yet reached its limit. The air now resounded with turmoil and hideous outcries, that could only mean one thing, the arrival of reinforcements; and these speedily turned out to be five hundred Iroquois from the Richelieu. Several of the besieged had already been killed

or wounded, and owing to the deserters their pitiable condition was only too well known. Still, the newcomers advanced with caution, approaching according to custom when their blood was not thoroughly up, screeching and leaping from side to side, perhaps expecting to gain possession by fair words or threats without striking a blow. But the loopholes were still manned, and from every French musket leaped its tongue of flame, stretching some of them dead on the ground, while the rest as usual took safety in flight. Again and again for the next three days came the futile attacks, delivered with malicious intent, but little real vigour — no wonder the unhappy settlers termed them incarnate demons; and throughout the never-ending hours, Dollard and his men, half-crazed for want of sleep, reeling with weakness and pain, fought and prayed as before, now, alas, only praying for death.

Weary of the too-long lasting humiliation, and anxious to turn their attention elsewhere, the braves in council at length determined to end the siege; and never willing to expose their persons to danger, ingeniously made themselves *mantelets* of pieces of wood lashed together,

long enough to cover head and body entire. Arrayed in these, they rushed headlong at the palisade, and, crouching close to the ground, began furiously to hew down the logs with their hatchets. Out of range of the loopholes, this move was one of extremity for the defenders, who, however, had still courage and ingenuity to face it. Having no grenades, they loaded some musket barrels to bursting, and threw them down among the enemy, where they exploded, scattering death broadcast. For a time the ruse succeeded in holding them off, but the muskets not in use were soon at an end and the hewing recommenced. A keg of gunpowder was suggested as an alternative. With reviving spirit the suggestion was received and acted upon, but for the heroic garrison it proved the beginning of the end. Lighting the inserted fuse, it needed the combined strength of several men to hurl the keg over the palisade, when, with hands still uplifted in the act, their horrified eyes saw it strike the overhanging bough of a tree. For an instant it seemed to poise in the air, then rebounded and fell backwards into the fort. They threw themselves upon their faces. There was a terrific explosion, cries, commotion, and a blinding smoke. When the

Frenchmen recovered themselves, it was to find every one of their loopholes seized, and the muzzles of their enemies' weapons thrust through from the outside.

With vociferous howls of delight the savage assailants in numbers were soon climbing the palisades in all directions, and descending hatchet in hand, attacked all, whether able or not to withstand their frenzy. Dollard, begrimed, bloody, fainting, was the last man upon his feet, and with the horrible vision of torture awaiting the wounded, signalised the sacrifice of his life by yet one more act of mercy. One or two of his countrymen, wounded to death, lay at his feet, and these, with one swift thrust of his sword, he bereft of life, fearlessly turning to meet his own end a few minutes later.

Overpowered and sent to death as they were, this act of renunciation has sometimes been deemed a useless sacrifice, and an attempt has even been made to rob it of well-won renown; but whether the savage tribe engaged had nobility enough to honour the splendid courage and fortitude of the dead, or for what reason remained unknown, certain it is that their determination to overwhelm and massacre the settlements was abandoned, and never again were the colonists



CAPE ROUGE

subjected to the same agonising persecution of terrorism as before.

So passed the Sieur des Ormeaux and his noble associates, for all time a memory and an inspiration to be shared by those who bear the name of Canadians.

The Defence of Verchères



MORE than two hundred years ago, for it was in the autumn of 1692 that the following incident occurred, there lived on the picturesque and at the time almost unknown banks of the St. Lawrence, some few miles below Ville-Marie, a gentleman of old and aristocratic family, known as the *Sieur de Verchères*. He was the *seigneur* or feudal lord of the manor—a title that until lately existed in Canada with most of its ancient rights and privileges—and had formerly been an officer in the army of His Magnificent and Most Christian Majesty, Louis XIV. His residence was a fortified and palisaded mansion, round which, after the manner of the time, had crept the dwellings of all sorts of labourers and dependants, for the country was still over-run by its ancient owners, the Indians, whose cruelty and ferocity continued to be a theme of terror to the newcomers. The dwellings being clustered

together at no great distance, gave a feeling of security to the little community, for, should a descent at any time be made upon them, the people naturally found speedy refuge in the fort, and added to the strength of the garrison.

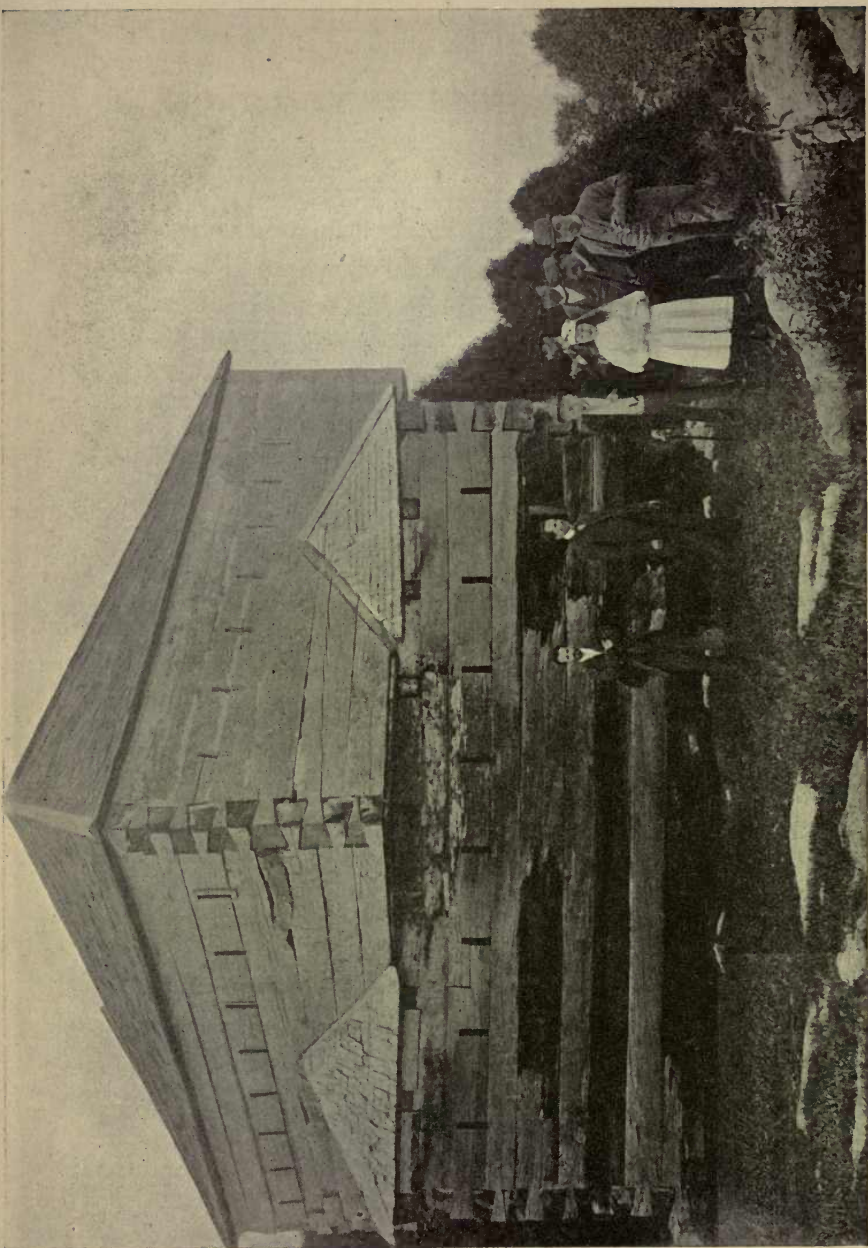
At the time, however, there had been no outbreak on the part of the savages for some months, and these exiles of *la belle France*, in accordance with circumstances, had fallen into a state of false security, from which, alas! they were to be rudely awakened. The Sieur de Verchères, accompanied by Madame his wife, had left home a few days previously for Quebec, where an annual ceremony of rendering fealty to the King in accordance with seigneurial rights and tenures rendered his presence necessary. Amidst the brilliant scenes with which the Château St. Louis was familiar during the old régime, this event was one of the most interesting, and received its full significance under the haughty and capable Count Frontenac. The procedure was simple but impressive. In the council chamber the Governor, surrounded by his semi-royal court, awaited each seigneur, or landowner, who, attired in uniform and orders, and wearing a sword, was introduced into his presence by the proper official. Kneeling upon one knee, in

20 THE DEFENCE OF VERCHÈRES

homage to the representative of his King, one gentleman after another yielded up his sword, and with his right hand between those of the Governor, repeated the ancient oath of fidelity, afterwards to be entered in a register and signed and countersigned with official exactitude. In the absence of Monsieur and Madame, the head of the family for the time being was their eldest child and only daughter, a girl of fourteen or so, named Madelaine.

At the time the reedy bays and indentations on both shores of the river were alive with the fluttering wings and excited quackings of wild-duck, on their semi-annual migratory flight. The long summer had been spent in the far north nesting and bringing up their young, and now as usual they sought a climate more genial in which to spend the winter. Day by day myriads of the graceful water-fowl, with their glossy dark necks and breasts of silvery grebe, might be seen passing overhead in wedge-shaped flocks, though rarely without spending some days at least in their favourite St. Lawrence feeding-grounds.

To the average man nothing is more irresistible than a shot at duck in the season, and in the natural course of events the garrison had



OLD BLOCKHOUSE

taken the opportunity of combining holiday and business in supplying the larder of the mansion. With powder and shot from the magazine the next few days pointed to a famous bag, but under the circumstances the house and ammunition were left to the protection of as small a garrison as it well could be. The *ménage* consisted of but one soldier, a man of eighty, too feeble to be of much service in the fields, two boys of ten and twelve years, sons of the seigneur, several women and children, and Mademoiselle de Verchères.

It was a day very characteristic of early autumn, warm and still, and the settlers were busy in the surrounding fields getting in their crops. Formerly, such had been the terror inspired by the savages, that during harvest all the reapers would go in company from field to field, protected by a handful of soldiers fully armed, who kept a watchful eye on the forests on all sides, in case of sudden onslaught. But now not an Indian had been seen for some time, and the labourers, happily gathering in the kindly provision of nature, were regaining all their customary light-heartedness over their work. The fascinating scene presents itself to the mind's eye. We can imagine the red and yellow

22 THE DEFENCE OF VERCHÈRES

glories of the maple woods on both sides of the river, and climbing the hills in the distance, there overhung with its faint blue haze, the lazy caw of the crows settling on the newly-cut grain, the dreamy calm of the shortening days—for these things at least are not changed.

On such a day the young châtelaine had left the house, and wandered down to the river-side at some little distance from the walls, where in peaceful contemplation of the smoothly flowing grey-blue current she stood shading her eyes and gazing across the wide shining track of gold cast by the westering sun.

But what was that? The sharp report of a musket, followed by discordant and blood-curdling whoops and yells! Another—another—and another! The first wildly paralyzing shock betrayed the horror of its origin. She had heard the awful sounds before . . . it was . . . the Iroquois!

Madelaine gave a hasty glance round. There was no mistake. A number of savages, emerging from a covert of tangled brush at no great distance, were led by an athletic young brave far in advance of his comrades. Already he was near, and with a long bound on the part of the girl, a wild race for life or death began. As

she recounted the deadly peril of the situation long afterwards, the young girl was conscious of nothing but the interminable lapse of time, and a desire to let the situation be known to the helpless people within the fort.

"To arms! . . . to arms!" she cried in piercing tones that seemed like unfamiliar echoes in her own ears. Fortunately the distance was not great, but already the slight young figure with its flying hair knew that her cruel foe was almost upon her. An instant and she would have gained the half-open portal, when a sinewy brown hand descended upon her, grasping, *O, le bon Dieu!* not the soft dark hair almost floating into his triumphant face, but the kerchief wound about the maiden's shoulders. With a quick instinctive movement the neck-fastening was wrenched asunder, and the astonished Iroquois fell back clutching the flimsy covering in his hand. One moment's pause was sufficient, and the discomfited savage recovered himself in time to see his prey escape through the heavy door, which was forthwith shut and bolted in his very face.

Inside all was confusion. The craven defender was nowhere to be seen, and the women were found huddled together in the corners in helpless terror, their faces ghastly, their eyes staring

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in wild apprehension. But Madelaine was undaunted by the aspect of affairs. With the intention of warning the harvesters of their danger, which was all that could be done at the moment, she loaded the small swivel gun, which stood in the courtyard with its four-pound balls, and fired it once or twice with her own hands. Her brothers, undismayed with the turn of events, she occupied in making tours of inspection, and together they saw that the gates were more stoutly secured. Here and there, where the palisades—logs eight or ten feet in height, planted upright to form a barricade—had become weakened from any cause, they managed to prop them up and render serviceable.

Fortunately the enemy had not followed up their first advantage, or all would have been over in a very short time. The gain was immense, and, taken advantage of, afforded time in which to collect the thoughts and at least contrive some kind of plan to be followed. Under energetic treatment all the defences were soon outwardly secure. Now for the ammunition. But here a surprise met the girl! Suddenly entering the apartment in which the powder was stored, she encountered the missing soldier, where certainly he had no right to be, at the moment en-

deavouring to strike a spark from the flint and steel he held in his trembling hands. Her look of amazement was followed by quick resentment as she took in the situation. A moment before she had been saying to her young brothers:

"Let us fight to the death—remember that gentlemen are born to shed their blood in the service of God and the King"—and now this!

"What are you doing here?" she asked imperiously.

The man hesitated, then replied sullenly:

"I was going to light the powder, mam'zelle—it is better than . . ."

"You are a miserable coward," said Madelaine, pointing to the door fiercely, "go!" The reproof struck home. The man slunk away to the courtyard, where, stung by the contempt of his little mistress, he recovered his spirit, and was soon taking an active part in the repulse of a well-organised attack from without. And now began an exciting and memorable siege, for the savages, tired of slaughtering the defenceless harvesters, circled about under cover, keeping a watchful eye on the enclosure, though hesitating to approach too near.

None disputed the authority of Mademoiselle, and nothing seems to have escaped the notice

26 THE DEFENCE OF VERCHÈRES

of the brave girl. The women and children, as much, if not more, influenced by her demeanour than by her words, had long since ceased their cries, and were eager to assist to the best of their ability. Everything that could be seen from without was arranged to give the idea of a considerable and active garrison. With this end in view Madelaine took off her own pretty *coiffure* and replaced it by a man's hat, which she took pains to raise into view as often as possible, that her assailants, seeing her, should not guess the condition to which the fort had been reduced.

But a still more anxious time was to come. As the short autumn day drew to a close, a cold wind blew up from the east, giving warning of a stormy night. No doubt an attack would be made under cover of darkness. The troops (!) were addressed with spirit by Made-moiselle, who told them that even if she were cut to pieces and burned before their eyes—such atrocities were not then unknown—they were not to surrender. They were then disposed of to the best advantage. The soldier was sent to the blockhouse to protect the women, children, and ammunition, while the four bastions or redoubts, one at each corner, were manned

respectively by the octogenarian, the two boys, and herself, fully armed. From these points a constant "All's well" was kept up through the long night, while the storm turned to sleet and snow, and beat upon their defenceless heads. What a night it must have been! Fancy the anxious eyes straining through the darkness, the sigh of the wind like stealthy footsteps, and the thought of the hideous fate in store for them if help came not, while out in the fields lay those who had so gaily departed to their work in the morning, their cold, dead faces upturned to the sky.

Long, however, as was the night, day at length dawned, and some at least of the anxiety vanished. With the light courage was restored, and having held out so far, hope of relief came back. No vigilance was for a moment relaxed, nor did Mademoiselle quit her post on the bastion except to make the round of every part of the mansion and its outworks, always assuming as she did so a cheery, hopeful manner that kept up all hearts. As she said herself—for this story was told in detail long afterwards by her own lips—"I may say with truth that I did not eat or sleep for twice twenty-four hours."

28 THE DEFENCE OF VERCHÈRES

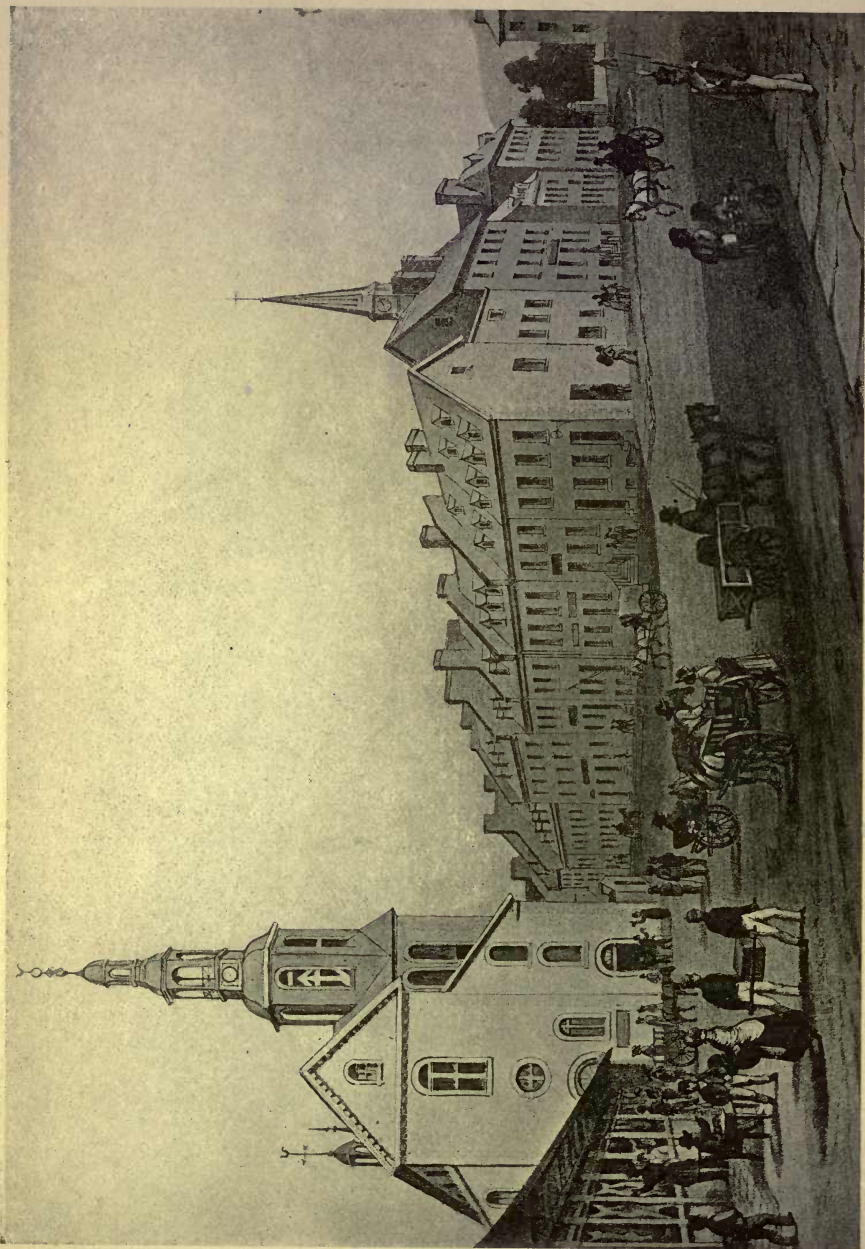
This state of things went on for seven long days and nights, the strain constant, the enemy always on the alert, and none can understand what alertness is who have not taken part in savage warfare. Fortunately, food and ammunition seem to have been sufficient, and, after the first, there was no thought of surrender. How their condition was at length discovered we are not told—the duck-shooters, warned by the cannon, must with incredible exertions have secured aid from a long distance, for near there was none. The state of our heroine when help came is very natural, and makes the story live again as if the intervening centuries were but a light mist to be blown aside by the breeze of a summer day. Worn out with watching and anxiety the poor child had gone to sleep, her head upon the table, her long loaded musket across her outstretched arms. Was it all a dream—this sudden tramp of men approaching—the rattle of arms, the challenge of the sentry:

“Qui vive?”

Were they friends or foes? She sprang up, and running to her tower called out:

“Who are you?”

Think of the relief when the welcome answer reached her ears:



OLD MARKET SQUARE

"We are Frenchmen! It is La Monnerie who comes to bring you help!"

This was the end of one of the most gallant of defences, and it is not likely that the young officer was unwilling to resign her command. Well might her successor say that it had been in good hands!

There is no portrait extant that we can rely upon of this brave girl. The rich dress of the period may possibly have been hers—the brocaded silk skirt and pointed bodice, the high-heeled shoes and powdered hair—but I am afraid our heroine was as unfamiliar with such grandeur as we are ourselves. Indeed, it is more than likely, in the Canada of those days and circumstances, that seigneur's daughter as she was, her gown was made of the coarse *étouffe du pays*, and that wooden *sabots* sometimes covered her little feet. But it matters not what she wore! Young as she was, upon her rested the duties and obligations of the seigneur her father. Life and property were under her charge, and she would have died rather than prove unfaithful to the trust. Her story would be difficult to match in any other country.

Canada and her British Neighbours in 1745



THE attitude of the French and English to each other in America during the earlier part of the eighteenth century had not arisen from new hatreds or wrongs kindling into sudden flame between new peoples. It was the natural outcome of the centuries-old quarrels and misunderstandings of two great nations, transplanted to fresh surroundings, and plentifully supplied with all needed material in an arrogant trade rivalry and seizure which neither could or would brook in the other, and into which, on both sides, had been enlisted the merciless and bloody services of their Indian allies.

On land, from Tadousac on the St. Lawrence to the Far West, at many a well-chosen intersection of lake and river, the French had built trading posts, each with its loopholed block-house or substantial stone fort, in some cases

menaced by their English neighbours, who had frequently succeeded in attracting the fur supplies and general trade of the Indians. At sea piracy was not uncommon on both sides, and from Louisbourg the whole fishing industry of the British colonies was kept in constant alarm, owing to the hostile supervision there maintained. Louisbourg, the only French naval station in North America, was admirably situated to command the entire coast, and being the continual resort of armed craft, had won for itself the name of the American Dunkirk.

The French government had spent twenty-five years in rendering this place impregnable, after the system of Vauban; and Parkman, the historian, estimates its cost at the enormous sum of thirty million francs. Like a fair woman the fortress sat secure among the storms and mists of the Cape Breton coast, gazing straight across three thousand miles of sea at her mother country. King's, Queen's, Dauphin's, and Princess's bastions, outworks, and armaments all complete, mistress of the iron-bound coast and of Canada, she was indeed a crown jewel in the hand of the King.

The fort stood between its harbour and the sea, on a spit of land, the end of which lengthened

out in an easterly direction in shoals and reefs, leaving the entrance of the fine harbour not quite half a mile wide. The passage was overlooked by a powerful defence called the "Island Battery," built on an isolated rock on the west side of the channel, and by another outwork named the "Royal," or "Grand Battery," at the base of the harbour, so that an enemy trying to force an entrance would receive a front attack from the one battery and a flank fire from the other. The strongest portion of the fort proper was on the land side, where a ditch eighty feet wide and at least thirty feet deep, and a rampart of earth sixty feet thick, faced with masonry, extended across the entire width of the little peninsula, cutting it off from the mainland. An additional and highly valued safeguard was the wide salt marsh towards which the glaciis sloped, and the only roads entered through the portcullised west and south gates, overlooked respectively by the Dauphin and Princess bastions. The main fortifications had embrasures for one hundred and forty-eight cannon, but these had never been fully equipped, and, at the end of the siege, the number was variously stated as from seventy-six to ninety, while those on the outlying batteries comprised thirty pieces each of heavy ordnance.



CAPE BRETON COAST, NEAR LOUISBOURG



CANSO

Such is an outline of the works and fortifications that most of the good and very provincial folk of the New England colonies, having neither seen nor dreamed of, undertook to seize. They were, in truth, more simple than reckless, whom a turn of events could rouse to the pitch of enthusiasm. Their simplicity is amusingly shown by the hope that it might be taken by good luck "when the enemy was asleep."

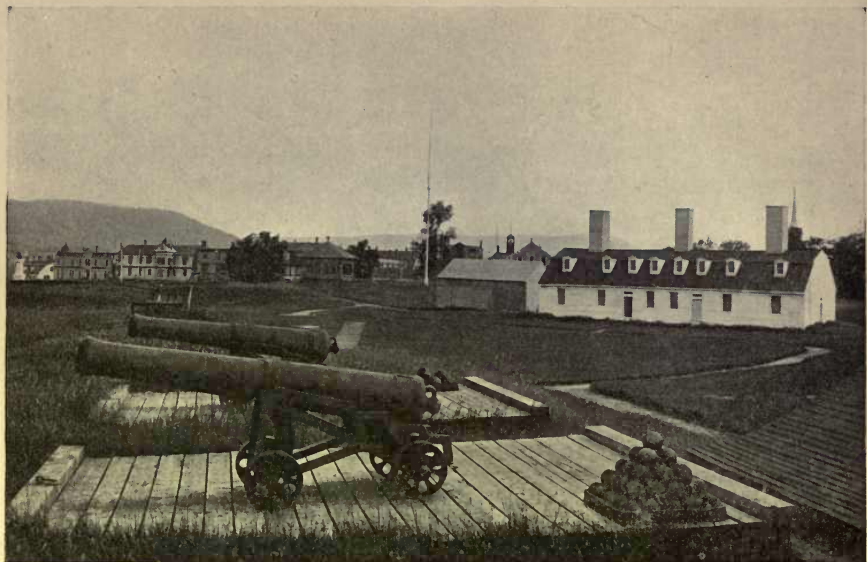
In 1744 affairs in America were apparently proceeding in the usual way, when a portion of Europe flared up internally in a fierce dispute between Austria and Prussia, a proceeding that set the mind of the Commandant of Louisbourg on fire with the desire to recover control of Acadia. Taking advantage of the circumstances, he hastily sent a couple of armed vessels, commanded by Captain Duvivier, against Canso, an English fishing station situated at the south end of the strait of that name, long an eyesore to him. It was occupied by about eighty Englishmen, busy with their work, and almost wholly unprepared for attack. The fishermen, in their peaceable occupation, were easily forced to give in, on condition that they should be sent to Boston, and the little village was reduced to ashes. Emboldened by this success, the Com-

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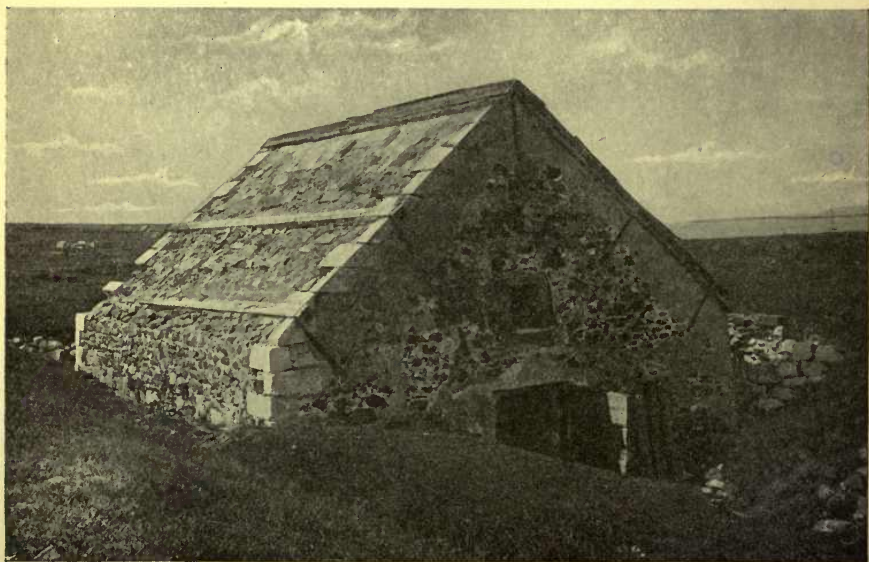
mandant forthwith launched the more ambitious scheme of reducing Annapolis, a famous old fort on the Bay of Fundy. Once a well-guarded position, this place had of late been left pretty much to its own resources, and its fall would mean the submission of the whole of Acadia.

It is not necessary at present to go into details; suffice it to say that Annapolis, though in a more or less dilapidated condition, showed promptness and courage in its defence, and after a desultory siege of six weeks the attacking party suddenly took to their ships and disappeared. The attempt, however, with the seizure of Canso, was mourned by the candid and peaceable correspondent, "A Habitant of Louisbourg," as a dire want of judgment from the beginning; and his sensible remark that "Perhaps the English would have let us alone if we had not first insulted them," is undoubtedly correct.

News of the unprovoked attack at Canso was naturally carried to Boston by the dislodged and injured fishermen, and their indignant story, coupled with the trouble at Annapolis, spread anger and consternation through the colonies. The smouldering fire of resentment in which



IN THE OLD FORT, ANNAPOLIS ROYAL



POWDER MAGAZINE, OLD FORT, ANNAPOLIS ROYAL

William Vaughan, to whom large seafaring interests had taught experience, had long held the Acadian enemy, set alight the torches of others, notably Governor Shirley of Massachusetts; and a petition was rapidly prepared and presented to the Assembly, asking for men and means with which to attack Louisbourg. The idea was not entirely novel, though it had never been dreamed of otherwise than as a scheme of the greatest importance for the Home Government, with what minor assistance the colonies might be able to offer.

England, however, had grave enough matters on her hands in Europe at the time, and, in any case, seldom considered the anxieties and perils of her colonists in such a serious light as they did themselves. It was urged that to wait for permission or help from that source would be worse than useless, as it would give France ample time to send assistance without limit to her overseas defences. On the contrary, the finances of Massachusetts and the other colonies had been in a bankrupt condition for some time; none had any militia except of the most untrained description, and scarcely an officer who knew what a fort was like, much less the method of attack. All these things

considered, it is not surprising that the bill, though treated with profound gravity, was defeated, to the intense annoyance of its supporters. At once, however, public feeling proved that a mistake had been made. "If those not immediately concerned only stand gazing on while the wolff is murthuring other parts of the flock, it will come to every one's turn at last," appears to have been the general and earnest impression. All the minor trials of the hand-in-hand colonies were submerged, and the engrossing jealousies and animosities forgotten in the prospect of freeing themselves from their big, long-dreaded neighbour. Such was the mettle with which the scheme was discussed, that the Assembly was induced to reconsider its determination, and the measure passed, though, it is said, with the smallest possible majority.

With immense energy and determination Governor Shirley, Vaughan, Pepperel, Roger Wolcott, and others entered into the preparations. A good deal of excellent but unenthusiastic advice, like that of Benjamin Franklin, "Fortified towns are hard nuts to crack, and your teeth are not accustomed to it; but some seem to think that forts are as easy taken as snuff," was offered, but not acted upon.

Massachusetts, as the head and front of the expedition, raised money, recruited over three thousand men, and was indefatigable in impressing the need of union on her sister colonies, until the ardour of New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island was worked up to the proper pitch. William Pepperel, a wealthy merchant of Kittery, possessed of energy, good sense, some knowledge of volunteer tactics, and the necessary popularity, was selected and placed in command. Whatever may have been good Master Pepperel's ideas of his own qualifications, the widely religious communities in simple faith gave their cause as well into the care of a higher Power, without which, they were convinced, the earthly one would be of little avail.

Each of the four New England colonies at the time supported her own little navy, comprising ten armed sloops all told. Each carried from eight to twenty guns, most of which were but nine-pounders, with a few twenty-two-pounders thrown in, and the efficacy of these toys against the armaments they sought to attack may be readily judged. It was stated at the time that one or two French frigates, several of which might arrive at any moment,

could easily disarm the whole fleet and hold the transports, so that the besiegers, without means of retreat or relief, would be forced to give in or perish.

At this point, Governor Shirley bethought him of an expedient. Unfortunately, no British ships were near, but the sixty-gun ship *Superbe*, with the *Mermaid* and *Launceston*, of forty guns each, were known to be at Antigua, under Commander Warren, whose personal interests in New England would at any time cause him to lend more than merely professional aid. A despatch boat was therefore fitted out to find and secure the services of Warren; but great was the envoys' disappointment to find that he and his officers in council felt their powers too limited to be able to participate. Without losing time, the chagrined deputation set out on their return, but scarcely had the boat disappeared on the horizon when a delayed order from the Admiralty arrived, empowering their representative in certain cases to act on his own judgment. Under the circumstances, as soon as possible the little fleet cheerfully made sail for Nova Scotia.

In the colonies all was soon ready. Religious zeal and belief in the justice of their cause had



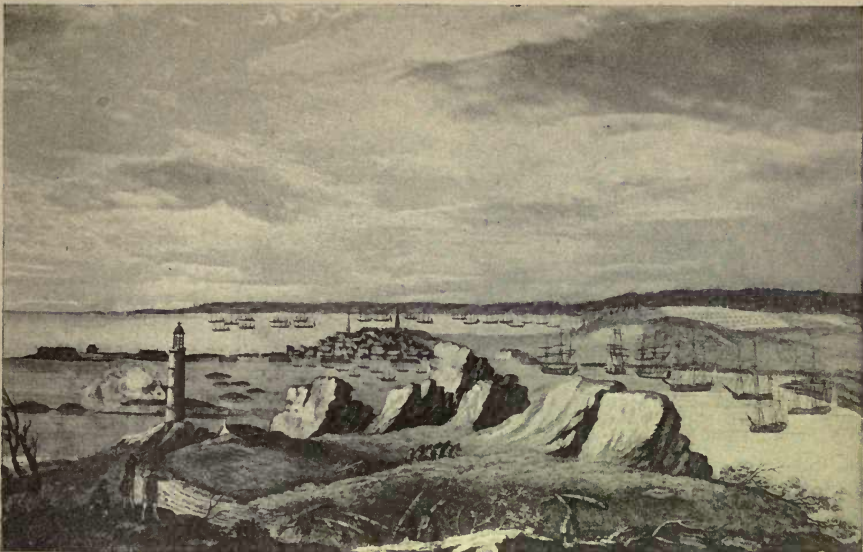
TYPE OF THE BRITISH NAVY, 1745

aroused immense enthusiasm, and in less than seven weeks of preparation the heterogeneous fleet of ninety transports with its convoy left Nantasket Roads, followed by as heartfelt prayers and inspiring good wishes as ever, before or since, helped an expedition to give a good account of itself.

The Siege of Louisbourg



ON the 24th of March the flotilla left its moorings, but scarcely was it well out to sea when the rolling of the little vessels, the threatening weather, and the well-known dangerous character of the coast, must have made some at least regret the adventurous spirit that had cajoled them into such a difficult position. The gale increased, bringing with it a "very fierce Storm of Snow," to quote one of the citizen-soldiers; but the ex-fishing and coasting craft, now Government transports, were manned by fishermen who, like our own men of the Grand Banks, can scarcely be approached in the practical handling of boats. Knocked about by grievous headwinds they certainly were, and considerably scattered, but after a lively experience of ten or twelve days, the fleet safely made its rendezvous at Canso, not one missing. The post



THE SIEGE OF LOUISBOURG IN 1758



THE OLD BELL OF LOUISBOURG

was at once retaken, and a scouting vessel sent along the coast to gain information.

Like all novices, the troops had beguiled themselves with the thought that conditions would meet them more than halfway, and that the project would be a comparatively easy one. They were therefore taken aback to learn that the harbour of Louisbourg, which they had planned to enter on the night of arrival, was still fast bound in ice. Patience perforce became the virtue of the moment. The time, however, was not lost. The raw recruits, even then inclined to assert their American independence, had enough good sense to learn something of drill and other necessary matters in the interval, and a blockhouse was built and mounted with small guns for the security of the returning fishermen. A short time afterwards, as a first success, some of the cruisers prowling about in the vicinity of the fortress, captured several boats carrying supplies to the garrison, and these, no doubt, proved very acceptable to the four thousand hungry men of the expedition.

Matters were further enlivened by the arrival of the *Eltham*, a well-known British ship used to convoy the yearly colonial fleet of merchant-

men to and from England, with news that Commander Warren, with the *Superbe*, *Mermaid*, and *Launceston*, newly arrived from the West Indies, was following. The joy with which this information was received can scarcely be imagined, owing to the recent official refusal; and shortly after their arrival at Canso, the four men-of-war, with their provincial supporters, flags flying and billowing canvas, a gallant spectacle, left to blockade Louisbourg and harass all vessels under French colours that they might encounter.

The exceptionally cold weather continued, but fortunately for the forces, the densely wooded shores of Cape Breton provided plentiful fuel, and the men were kept busy chopping down trees and sawing the logs into six-foot lengths, with which to keep up their enormous camp fires. It was near the end of April before the ice broke up at Louisbourg, and the impatient contingent lost no time in setting off for their destination.

Few, if any, of the besiegers had more than a vague idea of the iron-bound coast, whose general craggy outline forbade landing. Even the fishermen plying their trade had given the neighbourhood a wide berth for some time

previous, and there had not been time to employ either scout or spy. Gabarus Bay, a fine sheet of water to the west of Louisbourg, was known to afford the nearest available place for getting ashore, and the rest was perforce left to chance. The fort, in the meantime, for several days had been thoroughly on the alert. From the first appearance of Warren in the offing a watchful eye had been kept on his movements, and when the transports were seen bearing towards Flat Point on the bay, it was the signal for the hurried appearance at that spot of Captain Morpain with about eighty men, to oppose the landing. The value of a successful invasion is a proceeding well understood in all warfare, and every schoolboy is familiar with the gallant resistance given the Romans in ancient Britain, when the warriors rushed out into the surf in their determined effort to beat off the advancing boats of their foes.

On land, Captain Morpain and his company held their position, watching the lowered boats lurching on the tide, as over the sides of the transports swarmed the variously clad volunteers; and many a mother's heart at home would have had cause to bleed with her boy as he toppled over into the water, had not a halt been ordered.

General Pepperel, on the alert, saw the danger from his post on the deck of the *Shirley*, and the boats heading for land were sharply recalled. With keen eyes their movements were watched from shore, and when at length a large number of boats, filled with their cheering freight, began to make for another opening some miles up the bay, there ensued a desperate race between rowers and runners for the point of vantage. On shore the way was circuitous, and in some places well-nigh impassable. Over rock and boulder, through swamp and underbrush scrambled the Frenchmen, handling their loaded muskets as best they could, and sometimes narrowly escaping an accidentally discharged bullet. But fate was against them; and as, breathless and weary, they emerged from their last thicket, it was to find many of the enemy already on shore, and boat after boat discharging more with all possible speed. A brisk encounter, however, took place, in which the French had six men killed and a number taken prisoner, upon which further opposition was withdrawn and the defenders retreated.

Before nightfall two thousand troops were safely landed, and so much being secured many following days witnessed the debarkation of the

rest, and the long and weary labour of moving the guns, ammunition, and stores of all sorts. In many cases the flat boats brought from Boston for the purpose were not found up to the weight of the cannon, which were barely saved from sinking to the bottom of the sea; and Green Cove not proving as good a harbour as had been hoped, the men were obliged to carry everything possible on their heads through the waist-deep icy surf, a terrible experience at that season of the year. Not the least of the difficulty lay in the large amount of seemingly useless forty-two-pound cannon balls to be unloaded. The heaviest of their own pieces were only twenty-two-pounders, and this fact almost amusingly explains the faith and determination held by the promoters of the expedition. The guns of the fort were known to be of the larger calibre, and a supply for their service after capture had been thoughtfully laid in in advance.

Though now the beginning of May, not a vestige of spring was yet visible. The brown branches of the trees presented almost the aspect of mid-winter, while in sheltered parts of the woods, and the clefts of the rocky shore, patches of snow and ice could still be dis-

cerned, adding noticeably to the keenness of the atmosphere.

Scarcely had the irrepressible Vaughan landed, when he secured command of a number of men, and proceeded without ceremony to reconnoitre the surrounding country. With characteristic freedom he first made his way to a hill overlooking the town, which he and his company saluted with three rousing cheers, to the amazement of the garrison, who had never seen such an undisciplined mob before. Vaughan's next achievement was to round the inner side of the harbour in search of the French storehouses, and for this purpose he made a *détour* into the bush, in order to keep out of range of the Grand Battery situated on the water's edge. In this he was successful. No attempt was made to bar his progress, and shortly afterwards dense volumes of smoke and flame rolling skywards, proclaimed the destruction of extensive warehouses full of naval supplies.

In the morning, as the silence remained unbroken, Vaughan and a picked patrol returning, cautiously stole nearer to the walls, when, to their unbounded surprise, they perceived no sign of life about the place. A Cape Cod Indian present was induced to make a closer survey,

and, followed by every eye, he stealthily advanced towards the postern, prepared to fly with all the agility of his race should he find himself entrapped. Close and closer to the walls he drew, listening intently, and a brown hand was noiselessly extended towards the gate. The strain upon the onlookers was intense. With a slight movement the heavy door swung backward, and a hasty glance into the interior was followed by a jubilant attempt at a war-whoop, which brought the watchers dashing over the ridge and down the slope. A hurried survey revealed the astonishing condition of affairs. Within reigned disorder and confusion. Clothing, arms, and overturned furniture thrown about in every direction showed too evident proof of panic and hasty evacuation. In a state of bewilderment the men roamed from room to room, until Tufts, a lad of eighteen, gallantly climbed the flag-pole, and holding his red coat in his teeth fastened it to the top in lieu of a flag. His action called forth a ringing cheer from his comrades, and, at the same time, a lively volley from the Citadel, which caused him to drop without loss of time to safer quarters.

The emphatic and surprising fact that the place was their own without a blow being

struck, remained. It was complete in every respect, with several mortars in their places, and the black muzzles of forty-two-pounders, thirty in number, grinning from their embrasures over the water, with smaller guns raking backward over the woods. These had been hastily spiked, it is true, but were otherwise in perfect condition; and quantities of cartridges, bombshells, and other invaluable stores on every hand confirmed the astonishing luck of their first adventure. As General Wolcott's report afterwards stated, "two hundred men might have held the battery against five thousand without cannon."

But no time was to be lost. A hurried note was despatched to headquarters, asking for instant assistance, and, even as they waited, four boats crowded with men were seen approaching from the fort, with the evident intention of re-occupying their position. But their courage had returned too late. With resolute hearts and unflinching demeanour, Vaughan and his thirteen men took up a place on the open beach, exposed as they were to fire from the Dauphin bastion and the island as well as their nearer assailants, and with coolness and pluck held their own until relieved, when the



OLD FORT, LOUISBOURG

discomfited French pulled back to Louisbourg. A few minutes later found Pomeroy, the Boston gunsmith, who thirty years later was active in turning his weapons against the British at Bunker Hill, with his apprentice assistants from the ranks, each astride of a gun, doggedly drilling out new touch-holes, and by the next day several of them were ready to be used against their quondam owners.

In the meantime, the encampment of the troops and the placing of several batteries were being pushed forward as rapidly as possible. Having neither horses nor oxen, no way remained but for the men to move the guns by sheer strength of numbers from the place of landing. The nature of the ground to be crossed proved almost impassable, including bog and spongy moss, a stretch without cover of any kind, and for nearly two miles directly in front of the ramparts. It was the only way to reach the heights above the town, and the difficulty of the feat was incredible. Two hundred and even three hundred men were sometimes harnessed to one gun, which in spite of their efforts sometimes foundered in the marshy mire; and to add to the hardship the work had to be accomplished at night or during thick fog, otherwise the workers

would have been exposed to a continual raking fire from the garrison. The audacity and rashness of the besiegers knew no bounds, and only proves their inexperience. Even the ordinary precautions of war were disregarded. Only when the batteries were in the most exposed positions could they be induced to throw up earthworks, preferring to take their chances with the French gunners, who, though excellent shots with the musket, do not appear to have been adepts with the big guns. Often the cannon balls, harmlessly ploughing up the ground, are said to have been picked up by the lively colonists and sent back to do damage from their own muzzles. Not that the newcomers were at all admirable as marksmen when they began, for it would have been difficult not to do some damage to the large extent of wall. So little, indeed, did they know of artillery practice, that Commander Warren was obliged to send some of his ships' gunners to give them much-needed instruction, and numerous accidents resulted from double-shotting and other methods due to wanton ignorance. In the early days of the bombardment, great discouragement resulted when the small guns proved quite ineffectual against the solid masonry of the fort, and but for a fortunate

circumstance the siege would undoubtedly have had to be raised. A number of powerful cannon were opportunely discovered hidden in the sand-bank below the Grand Battery, and being unearthed at low tide, were brought by the same laborious methods as before to a position above the Citadel, from which they did great execution. From the diary of Captain Sherburn of the advanced battery, we take a Sunday morning's bulletin :

"Began our fire with as much fury as possible, and the French returned it as warmly from the Citadel, West Gate, and North East Battery, with cannon, mortars, and continual showers of musket balls; but by 11 o'clock we had beat them all from their guns."

From the other side the notorious Intendant Bigot gives equally interesting testimony :

"The enemy established their batteries to such effect that they soon destroyed the greater part of the town, broke the right flank of the King's Bastion, ruined the Dauphin Battery with its spur, and made a breach at the Porte Dauphine, the neighbouring wall and the redan adjacent."

So the siege proceeded steadily, the hostile batteries advancing by degrees until placed so close to the fortifications that the day's work

often began with jokes between the combatants, in execrable French on the one hand, and mocking healths and invitations to breakfast on the other. The defenders for a time managed to repair by night the breaches received during the day, but, despite their care, several of their batteries became disabled and silenced. To every discerning eye the work of destruction grew apace, the streets of the little town were ploughed with cannon balls from end to end, the houses all more or less destroyed, and the trembling citizens, growing more familiar with the daily scenes of carnage, were driven as a last resort to take refuge in the cellars.

A peculiar feature, under the circumstances, of this siege, was the single and feeble attempt at a sortie from within, which ended in failure and retreat; and this seems to prove the charge of inefficiency against the Commandant. A few vigorous attacks of this kind would inevitably have disabled the limited number of guns in the besiegers' hands, and these could not have been replaced. The true mettle and splendidly adventurous spirit always shown by the French in Canada, makes it probable that Duchambon might have thus dislodged the batteries so close at hand had he possessed the courage. But it

was not to be. The resources of the island, on the occasion of a midnight assault from the Grand Battery, had been strained to their utmost, when, after a fierce hand-to-hand fight, it had repelled the New Englanders with many killed and drowned. Before the end of the siege, however, the gallant little outwork was knocked to pieces by guns mounted on a height at the east side of the harbour. From this spot, it is worth noticing, General Wolfe effected a similar destruction some fourteen years later during the second siege, after which Louisbourg was blown up and dismantled.

All the persistency and determination of the colonists, however, would have been of little avail without the efficient aid of the wooden walls of Old England. By these the outward ring of defence was capably maintained beyond the harbour, and all French relief beaten off in a series of smart encounters that embody a story in themselves. The one possible attempt of the garrison to acquaint the mother country with the facts had resulted in capture, and France remained serenely unconscious of their desperate need of assistance until too late. The most formidable of these engagements took place towards the end of May, when the *Vigilant*,

a large ship carrying sixty-four guns and five hundred and sixty men, under the Marquis de la Maisonfort, attempted to force her way through the squadron. A fierce contest lasting several hours followed, but, after a determined resistance and the loss of eighty men, her colours were struck, to the exuberant satisfaction of the surrounding fleet. The *Vigilant* was carrying large stores of much-needed provisions and ammunition for her beleaguered compatriots, and these were regarded as truly providential by the pious colonial forces, whose stores at the moment had reached a perilously low ebb. The loss of this ship, whose arrival had been expected with keen hope by the garrison, proved a stunning blow, especially as she was fitted up with several others, and added to the strength of the enemy.

Two months had now elapsed since the beginning of operations, and Commander Warren began to grow impatient over the delay. He thought his position as a King's officer subordinated to that of the land forces, who desired all the renown for themselves. At length a decision was arrived at by which both divisions were to attack at the same time, from their different points of vantage. With dismay the besieged townspeople, who were reduced to

great straits, heard of the intention, and without delay presented a petition to the Commandant, urging their incapacity to withstand such an assault. They begged him to capitulate. Negotiations for peace were accordingly opened, and terms by which the troops should march out with arms and colours arrived at. The gallant defence was at an end, and the ships sailed peacefully into the harbour on the 17th of June, while General Pepperel and his forces advanced through the south gate, under what remained of the Princess bastion, a bronzed, ragged, emaciated, yet satisfied throng. It was not until the 3rd of July, at one o'clock in the morning, that Boston received news of the fall of Louisbourg, but the sudden joyful pealing of bells and thundering of cannon soon told the sleeping townspeople of the happy result of the war. There was rejoicing and thanksgiving throughout the whole country, and this in time spread to the mother country, which could scarcely believe that so much had been accomplished with such inadequate means.

There have been more dramatic events in history, perhaps, than the capture of Louisbourg, but few more audacious or unexpected. Set on foot by one determined and not too prudent

individual, and carried out by a heterogeneous party little better than adventurers, the scheme seemed to lack almost everything necessary for success. Recruited from anywhere over three or four of the New England colonies, the force, according to a sarcastic writer of the time, "had a lawyer for contriver, a merchant for general, and farmers, fishermen, and mechanics for soldiers." All things considered, much of its success was owing to the personal force of the commanding officer. General Pepperel from the beginning showed himself a leader of men, taking more than his share of the consequences, and frequently exercising tact and forbearance when sorely tried; while the troops, in their turn, proved once more that the Anglo-Saxon blood in their veins was as full of fire as ever before. In this way the madcap adventure was brought to a successful issue, to the vast satisfaction of the victors and the lasting surprise of the reader of history.

NOTE.—The extraordinary nature of this siege is ably explained by the Abbé Raynal, in his "Philosophical and Political History of the British Settlements in North America," translated into English in 1776. The writer briefly outlines the condition of affairs previous to 1745 at Louisbourg. The fort, with its garrison of 600, and the little town of 800 inhabitants, mainly occupied themselves in the work of construc-

tion and repair, which, indeed, they were eager to do as a means of livelihood. Unfortunately, bribery and the utter want of conscience among officials then prevalent in France, had spread to the colonies, and without doubt contributed largely to the downfall of Canada. Much of the immense sums lavished by the mother country upon Louisbourg had been divided between the principal persons of the colony and the officers, and the indignant protests of the unpaid people and soldiery had culminated in open mutiny for several months previous to the arrival of the New England contingent.

This event surely pointed to united action on the part of the defenders, and the soldiers made the first advances, with patriotic anxiety urging the necessity of issuing against their enemies, and overthrowing the works while in the course of construction. But the rapacious and unprincipled officers, mistrusting a generosity of which they were themselves incapable, and suspecting that the troops desired to make sallies for the purpose of deserting, kept them in a manner prisoners, until the opportunity had passed, and the persevering assaults of the enemy, by a series of fortunate accidents, reduced the fortress to the necessity of capitulating.

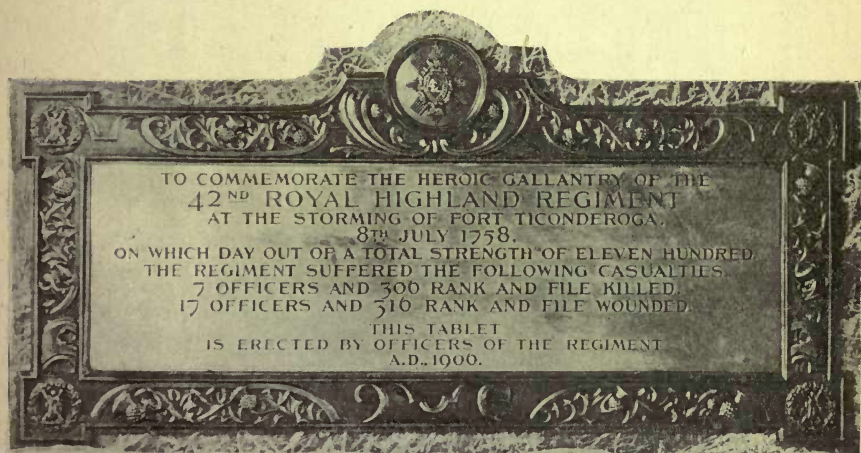
Ticonderoga



THE crisis approached rapidly. The decisive moment must be near when the terrific strain of this unnatural warfare should reach its final issue. The year 1757 had been one long series of events calculated to rouse French hopes to the heights of ultimate victory. The old prediction that all America north of Mexico should be theirs was about to be verified. From Louisbourg, returned to France by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in exchange for Madras, and now greatly strengthened and re-garrisoned, to Oswego, perpetual fighting with all its attendant miseries demoralised the country, leaving death and devastation in its track. In many places agriculture failed, causing want and poverty, and most of the arts of peace had ceased. The unhappy villages and more isolated country-places were surrounded with the constant and haunting horror of Indian barbarity, women and children were often carried



RUINS OF FORT TICONDEROGA IN 1897



MURAL TABLET IN BLACK WATCH MEMORIAL LIBRARY,
 TICONDEROGA

off to become the slaves of the savages, and sometimes, where protection could not be afforded them by the colonial governments, the terrified settlers abandoned whole districts and fled to shelter. The constant levies of militia in the different colonies, the continual increase of already too high taxes, and the presence of British troops at many points, added to the quarrels, jealousies, and dissatisfaction manifested on every hand, may not unnaturally have caused some of the reverses so much to be deplored.

No one portion of the country can be said to have been the headquarters of troops, for they were everywhere, frequently on the march from one point to another, through immense stretches of country wild and rough beyond description, without roads, covered with primeval forest, morasses through which it was almost impossible to force a way, and intersected by streams of unknown depth and perilous character.

The disastrous experiences of British arms in 1757 on the northern frontier of New York, the loss of Fort William Henry and the butchery of the unhappy defenders by the Indians, apparently escaped from the control of their Canadian allies, had concentrated attention

round the now historic environs of Lake Champlain. Here, it was felt, would occur the coming great struggle for supremacy between the powers, though Lord Loudon had predicted Quebec as the centre from which to paralyze and overthrow the ambition of France.

With this great end in view, the colonies in 1758 met a demand from William Pitt for twenty thousand men, about five times as many as ever before. These they were to raise, clothe, and pay, while the King, George II., would supply arms, ammunition, provisions, and other necessities. In answer to this, Massachusetts alone, in desperate anxiety for her own future, raised seven thousand men especially for the command of Abercromby, and in the middle of June, these, with British troops amounting in all to fifteen thousand, were gathered near the upper end of Lake George, a great spread of white tents with artillery and stores complete.

Montcalm, with forces less than a quarter in number, lay a few miles off at Fort Carillon, or Ticonderoga, an old point of dispute throughout the border warfare. The expressed intention of de Vaudreuil, governor of Canada, had been to send a considerable detachment of Canadians and Indians, under de Lévis and other famous

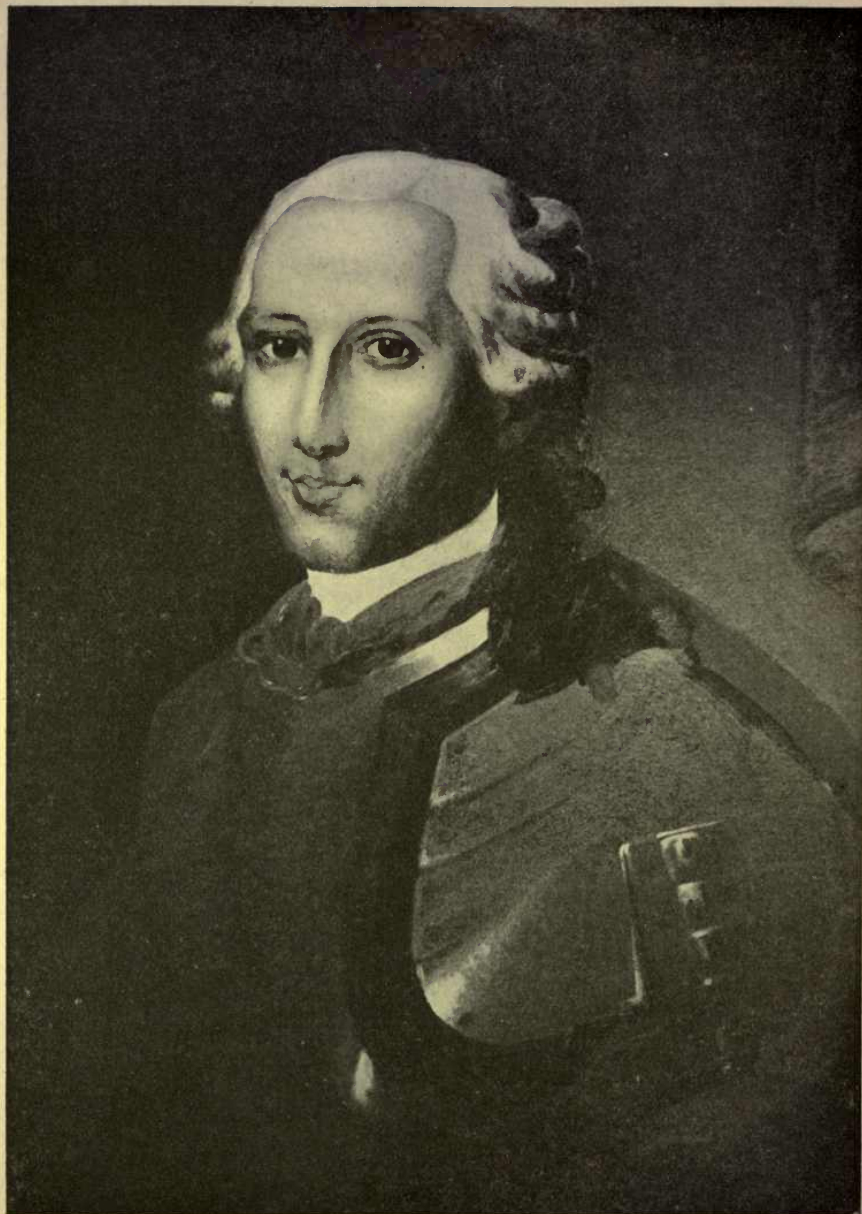
fighters, to Montcalm's assistance, but for some reason this had not been done. It is inconceivable to imagine that petty spite or jealousy on de Vaudreuil's part could have been allowed to influence his mind at such a time, but the circumstance is otherwise hard to account for. He knew the serious unrest of the colonies, the extent of British preparations, and that for a month previous Abercromby's camp had lain ready at Lake George. Yet, as day after day passed and the promised assistance failed to arrive, Montcalm must have felt himself and his command like some forlorn hope, betrayed and abandoned to its fate.

Rumour had placed the opposing force at twenty-five or thirty thousand, but, like Leonidas, there was no retreat for him. Canada must not be lost by any mis-move of his; yet, even for a mind fruitful in tactics, it was difficult to decide what to do. An indecision quite foreign to his nature had seized upon him, and with the exception of sending Berry with a detachment to the fort, another under Bourlamaque to the end of the portage, and himself with the main body occupying the old sawmill at the falls, the precious days leading to the engagement saw nothing in the way of defence being ac-

completed. Ruin stared him in the face, and life would be sold as dearly as possible.

The 5th of July had been chosen for the forward move of the British troops, and every detail being previously arranged, the great force embarked at daybreak in perfect order and the highest spirits. There were employed in the transportation nine hundred bateaux, one hundred and thirty-five whaleboats, and a large number of heavy floats with the artillery, which, as the procession later entered the Narrows, was drawn out into a line over six miles in length. The passing of this splendid spectacle, with its brilliant accessories of uniform and banners, the beauty of the summer morning, and the exquisite array of wood, water, and rolling hill, from which in turn echoed the harmonious strains of the regimental bands and the inspiring pibroch of the bagpipes, is well described by Parkman. Never, perhaps, had a more unique pageant greeted the eye in all this realm of the New World.

Nor was there wanting, among the massed colours of tunic and gold lace, the less familiar but always picturesque kilt and sporran, plaid and bonnet of His Majesty's Highland regiment, the Forty-Second, first of its class and young



DE VAUDREUIL

in years, but proud and confident in gallant hopes for the future. Among them were men who had seen the last stand of their countrymen among the hills and glens for their dearly loved prince, the determined but tragic effort to restore to the throne of their fathers the brilliant but not too scrupulous Stuarts. They had seen their leaders killed in battle, beheaded, deprived of property, scattered, and themselves with ruined homes and living under a heartbreaking surveillance; but, instead of encouraging bitter feelings and in turmoil hastening their own destruction, the loyal-hearted Highlands of Scotland had accepted their disappointment and punishment with sound common-sense. The Highland regiment happily christened the Black Watch, with its proud motto "Cuideachadh an Rìgh," or "Help the King," was already on the honour roll of the sovereign.

At their head on this occasion stood Campbell of Inverawe, Major, with his young son by his side. It was with no keen feeling of anticipation for the approaching battle, however, that the bright day saw him moving through scenery that compared favourably with his own beloved lochs and mountains. A gloomy foreboding of death that for some time had fettered his

Celtic imagination was about to be fulfilled. No power on earth could shake from his mind the vivid circumstance through which his warning had come. Again the grey stone walls of his ancestral home overlooking fair Loch Awe rose before his eyes, the wide old hall with its trophies of antlered deer and mountain cat, and himself wearily but happily surveying the contents of his shooting bag, result of a long day on the hills. Quietness brooded over the mansion, the servants had retired, when all at once the peremptory summons of the ponderous knocker gave its startling echoes through the house. In surprised haste the laird had opened, to find before him a dishevelled, panting figure, with wild aspect and incoherent tongue demanding sanctuary. A man had been killed, in self-defence, he explained, and already friends of the dead pursued. They were near. He implored shelter and succour! The situation at the time was not unheard of. In the recent patriotic rising the country had been full of just such cases, and scarcely a Highland house but was known to have harboured and aided the despairing victims of circumstance who fled from justice.

"Swear on your dirk that you will not betray me," pleaded the stranger in desperation. To



THE BLACK WATCH AT TICONDEROGA

soothe him the kindly laird had taken the ancient oath, and while offering hasty consolation had led him to a chamber far from the more used parts of the house, and instructed him to secure the ponderous door, and open only to one whose knock proved him in the secret.

Scarcely had he returned to the hall when the stranger's words had been confirmed. In stern and indignant haste men arrived, explaining to the startled laird unforeseen particulars of the occurrence. A deed had been done, with some extenuating circumstances, perhaps, but cruel and revengeful in character. Inverawe's own cousin had been foully murdered, and the pursuers were already on the track of the criminal. With horror and dismay Campbell listened, and while endeavouring to control himself, with the fatal oath ringing in his ears, had signified ignorance of the murderer, and hastened the searchers on their way.

In indecision and deep distress the hours passed as he strode to and fro in his chamber, until in sheer fatigue he threw himself on his couch, and fell into a fitful slumber. The beams of the waning moon were streaming across the room when he wakened, to see as in absolute reality the form of his cousin, wounded unto

death, standing by his bedside, and to hear in his familiar voice the distinct and thrilling words:

“Inverawe! Inverawe! Blood has been shed. Shield not the murderer!”

The next morning he had made his way to the locked apartment, and in great agitation informed the inmate that it was impossible to harbour him longer. With somewhat regained composure, however, the unwelcome guest reminded him of his promise, at the same time asking for a short continuance of his aid; upon which the laird, anxious to be rid of him, led the way by an unused path to a wild burn in the neighbourhood, and having shown him a deep crevice in the precipitous banks, left him. That night the wraith reappeared, uttering the same terrifying words, as if in passionate protest against his hearer's callousness: “Inverawe! Inverawe! Blood has been shed. Shield not the murderer!” and with no less stern and menacing an aspect than before faded slowly out of sight.

On the following day the unhappy laird, torn with doubts, visited the cave, to find that its late tenant had disappeared, leaving no trace of his presence. Nor was he ever heard of again.

Ill at ease, and almost overpowered with the strange occurrence, Campbell tossed sleeplessly through the succeeding night, more or less prepared for another appearance of the ghastly apparition. It came, and stood surveying him with pallid face and portentous aspect that chilled with penetrating fear, vanishing at last with distinct, mournful tones floating through the room :

“Farewell, Inverawe ! Farewell, till we meet at Ticonderoga !” The words in their slow significance conveyed the impression of a sentence of doom, from which there was no escape.

Years passed, and the country continued to be involved in troublous problems and more than distressing circumstances, but try as he would the laird found himself unable to forget the strange and apparently foreign word that had forced itself into his thoughts. Ticonderoga ! It was utterly unlike his native Gaelic, nor could he form an idea of any language it resembled. Yet somehow the smooth sound of its many syllables was never far distant from his mind.

Profoundly concerned in the unhappy condition of affairs, the gentry of Argyllshire showed rare and admirable tact in seizing the situation. With the object of soothing the people and bringing

them back to their loyalty, as well as improving their standing with the King and the Government, they hit upon an expedient. It was nothing less than to raise a regiment from among the late disaffected clans, and having clad and accoutred them in the old familiar but now prohibited national garb, to employ them in restoring order among the still turbulent Highlanders. This was done, and Campbell of Inverawe, joining as a junior officer, rose to the rank of major. It had been definitely arranged with the Government, in raising the regiment, that it was for home duty alone; but on the long continuance of the war in America, the Black Watch was at length despatched thither in command of its major. The strange fact in connection with their commanding officer was known and believed in by the generality of the regiment, and it was therefore learned by them with dismay, on reaching Abercromby's camp, that the French headquarters, a few miles off, though frequently called Carillon, was known in the Indian dialect as Fort Ticonderoga. In referring to the position, with intuitive good feeling, his friends insisted on using the name Carillon to the laird, and for a short time he was kept in ignorance of the truth. On the

eve, however, of the advance to meet the French, Inverawe, filled with a gloomy presentiment he could not control, wandered alone in the outskirts of the wood, and there, with the gaping wound in its breast, met face to face the restless spirit of his unavenged relative. With forced calmness, the fact was communicated to his brother-officers, and the words, "You have deceived me! This is Ticonderoga. I shall die to-morrow!" were never forgotten by those who thus knew the absorbing circumstances.

To persons familiar with the country and the winding character of the river connecting Lakes George and Champlain, the landing-place of the army shows that the rapids and falls would permit boats to go no farther. Most of the long day and night were spent in transit, and towards noon on the 6th of July, they disembarked at the head of the rapids, leaving a long arduous march for the troops in order to reach the entrenchments of the enemy.

The ground to be traversed on the left of the river was fairly level, with hills to the west, and all covered with compact primeval forest, full of briers, underbrush, and fallen mossy tree trunks, that made the route not only difficult but extremely confusing. Through this dense

growth it would be impossible to take the artillery, unless by previously constructing a road, and for that there was no time. It was rumoured that Montcalm would very shortly be reinforced by a large detachment, and the troops were therefore ordered forward at once in four divisions, without the guns. The leading division was in command of Lord Howe, colonel of the 55th, all unaware that in their course they had cut off an advanced body of about three hundred and fifty Canadians, who forthwith precipitately endeavoured to regain their own ranks through the woods.

Viscount Howe, an Irish nobleman, by his pleasant ways and sound practical methods, had made for himself a name to conjure with in every circle, civil and military. With him military tactics had become a highly developed science, and General Abercromby gave him first place as an adviser, while his watchful interest in the welfare and comfort of the ranks made him the idol of the men.

Owing to the nature of the ground, and unaware of the presence of the enemy, on this occasion discipline had been somewhat relaxed, and the men were advancing in what order they could, when a sharp exchange of musket shots

was suddenly heard, mingled with unintelligible shouts and expletives in French and English. In the uncertain light, with every bush possibly concealing either a friend or a foe, not knowing whether to advance or retire, dodging round trees among which their red coats offered a pitiably easy target, every man fought for his own hand. Scarcely knowing in what direction to aim, the scattering, vicious fire of a skirmish rained through the branches, burying bullets by the score in the trunks, and ripping the bark off the trees. In the first onset Lord Howe had dropped dead, shot through the heart, but except for those immediately beside him, none knew what had happened. The desperate conflict raged on, until with a rush about fifty Canadians, firing as they went, struggled back towards the hills, leaving a hundred and forty-eight of their company prisoners, and a number still blindly fighting their way across the British lines, to be killed or drowned in an attempt to swim the river. The English loss was small, but never had a deeper calamity befallen a force than in the death of Lord Howe. When the nature of their loss became known, gloom and widespread grief settled over the troops, depriving them,

as it were, of spirit, an evil omen for the expedition. "In Lord Howe," wrote an officer present, "the soul of General Abercromby's army seemed to expire. From the unhappy moment the general was deprived of his advice, neither order nor discipline was observed, and a strange kind of infatuation usurped the place of resolution." Fortunately such language as this, while it does honour to the honest grief of mankind, is generally exaggerated, or at best applies to the immediate future of such an event. That the terribly unexpected death of his right-hand man may have somewhat bewildered the judgment of Abercromby is possible, but the fact remains that the force was advancing without artillery *with* the approbation of Lord Howe. They were walking straight into the lion's jaws without being aware of it, and the want of heavy guns was the real cause of the later extraordinary ill-fortune of the brigade. Not disorganisation, and certainly not want of valour!

All night of the 6th of July the men were kept under arms, and the next morning, nothing having transpired, sent back to the landing-place, weary and dispirited, to march forward again after a much-needed rest. It was about



MONTCALM

noon of the 8th when they came in sight of the enemy.

In the meantime Montcalm had made up his mind what to do. Unaware of the fierce if short engagement that was taking place a few miles away, towards evening of the 6th the general had broken up camp at the saw-mill, and retired to a position about two-thirds of a mile from Fort Ticonderoga, where the troops under Berry had been engaged during the day in building a barricade of logs on the somewhat elevated land. Montcalm's eye at once seized the advantage of the ridge, a section covered with a dense growth of trees, and inspired a method. Whether in the streets of old Paris or in the wild woods of America the breastwork was always a favourite French form, and the following daybreak saw the whole force thrown into the work of strengthening the one already begun. In their shirt-sleeves, officers and men alike plied their axes with desperate haste all through the sultry July day, some felling, some trimming away the branches to add to the length and height of the wall, some merely cutting off the tops and leaving them as they fell all over the sloping ground. Thousands of trees were cut down

that day, and what with the jagged standing stumps of all heights, and the inextricable confusion of the prostrate trunks lying over a space a musket shot in every direction from the works, the ground is said to have resembled the result of a tropic hurricane.

The barricade itself was over eight feet high, and had plentiful loopholes cut through the logs in two or three tiers, so that those behind it were completely under cover. Nothing but artillery could have scattered such a contrivance, and the British had nothing in view but the sweeping fire of musketry and the bayonet. During the day Montcalm had been reinforced, though not as he expected. Three hundred French regulars under Captain Pouchot opportunely arrived, to be followed the next morning by de Lévis with one hundred more. This addition brought the force up to three thousand six hundred. Both officers were astonished at the amount of work accomplished and its threatening character. To an attack of anything but cannon they believed it would prove impregnable.

Towards noon the British and colonial forces began to emerge from the forest, and the assault, at first uneven, became more regular as they advanced. The breastwork they could see and

the maze of withering branches spread over the ground, but as yet no idea of its diabolical character had dawned upon them. The order had been to carry the barricade with the bayonet, and the troops were advancing at the double, when suddenly a long line of smoke gushed from the loopholes, followed by the ripping, screaming crash of thousands of bullets. The execution was terrible, the ranks pitiably thinned as the men, struggling to drag themselves from the pitfalls of the abattis, became every moment more entangled. For hours the furious fusillade raged, the thousands of attacking troops all the time floundering up to their shoulders among the masses of broken branches. Some of the Highlanders and others fought their way to the foot of the breastwork, and, mounting on each other's shoulders, seized the loopholes from the outside, or clambering over the top jumped down to meet death on the inner side. Time and again they fell back, only to re-organise and dash forward with greater spirit than ever. "The scene was frightful," says Parkman; "masses of infuriated men who could not go forward and would not go back, straining for an enemy they could not reach, and firing at an enemy they could not see; caught in the entanglement of



fallen trees; tripped by briars, stumbling over logs, tearing through boughs, shouting, yelling, cursing, and pelted all the time with bullets that killed them by scores, stretched them on the ground, or hung them on jagged branches in strange attitudes of death. . . . The French fought with all the intrepid gaiety of their nation, and shouts of *Vive le Roi!* and *Vive notre Général!* mingled with the din of musketry. Montcalm with his coat off, for the day was hot, directed the defence of the centre, and repaired to any part of the line where the danger for the time seemed greatest. He is warm in praise of his enemy, and declares that between one and seven o'clock they attacked him six successive times."

The splendid gallantry of provincials and regulars alike is indescribable, and the noted commander of the defence had all he could do on more than one occasion to save the barricade from their furious onslaughts. The Black Watch fought like demons. "Even those who were mortally wounded," wrote one of their lieutenants, "cried to their companions not to lose a thought on them, but to follow their officers and mind the honour of their country." For eight consecutive hours they stormed the barricade, and the

order to retreat, for which there is no word in the Gaelic language, had to be sounded many times before they reluctantly obeyed. When at last they did so, they carried off all their wounded, at the same time covering the retreat of the army with great coolness and deliberation. An officer present said afterwards: "The affair at Fontenoy was nothing. I saw both." For the conspicuous valour displayed by the division on this occasion, the King conferred upon it the distinguished title of Royal Highland Regiment, along with the red feather to be worn in the bonnet. Among the twenty-four officers of this corps killed and wounded, his presentiment fulfilled, fell Campbell of Inverawe, his son, Lieutenant Alexander Campbell, also receiving his death-wound at the same time. Both were rescued with great spirit and carried from the field, to die later of their mortal wounds—the father at Fort Edward on the Hudson, the son after reaching Scotland. Three-quarters of the strength of the Royal Highland Regiment shared the fate of its officers before the deadly loopholes, establishing a record that time will not allow to perish, and in all nineteen hundred and forty-four men were lost in killed, wounded, and missing on that fatal day.

Towards evening the utter futility of prolonging the assault had more than proved itself, and the attacking force withdrew by degrees, carrying away the wounded. The defenders, thankful for their own amazing success, had neither strength nor will to pursue, and indeed feared for some days that the battle might be renewed later with artillery; but this course was deemed inexpedient, and the army retreated to its former quarters, Abercromby offering no further molestation. By the French, whose attitude of mind before the battle is known, the victory was considered simply a miracle, and the invincible gallantry of their defence against overwhelming odds must remain a matter of pride and honour to Canadians for ever. In great exultation and profoundly impressed with the splendid valour of his battalions, Montcalm erected a great wooden cross on the spot, inscribing on it, in Latin and French, lines of his own composing to the honour and glory of God:

“Soldier and chief and ramparts’ strength are nought;
Behold the conquering Cross! ’Tis God the triumph
wrought.”

The Fall of Quebec



RANCE in America was still foremost in the race, but the struggle to keep the position was beginning to tell upon her strength.

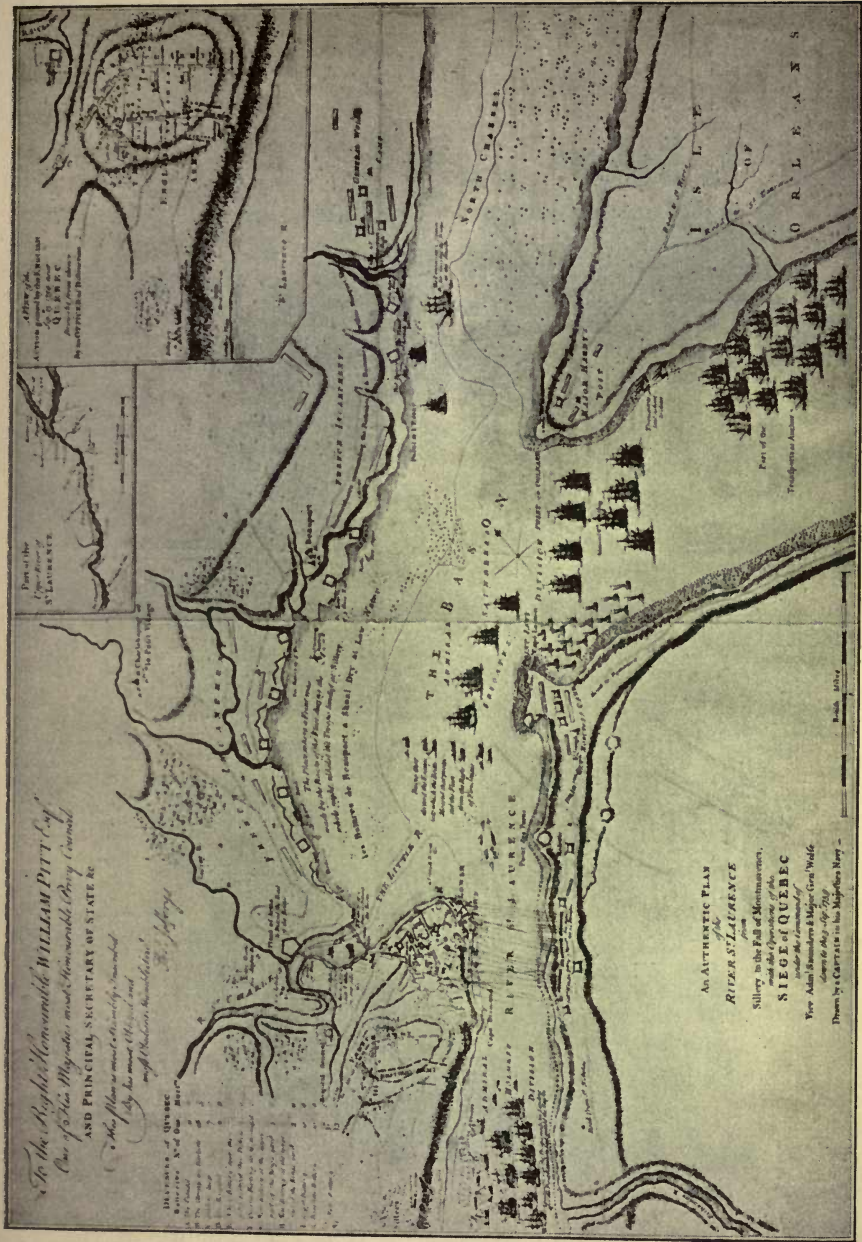
In 1758, the second fall of Louisbourg had cut Louis XV. to the heart; and, in September of the same year, Bradstreet had taken and dismantled Fort Frontenac. This important post, along with Oswego on the south shore, had hitherto controlled the outlet of Lake Ontario, and safeguarded the entrance to the Great West. Two months afterwards this success was followed by the French retreat from their old frontier fort, Duquesne, in Pennsylvania. Their only success, the reverse to British arms at Ticonderoga, seemed to but slightly retard progress, and the shadow of ponderous England was casting itself always more distinctly over the destiny of New France.

Well for his country, William Pitt had the affair in hand, and was concentrating his atten-

tion upon it. Also a new military genius had risen on the horizon, young, spirited, and capable, and into his hands the coming campaign was already entrusted. James Wolfe was on the eve of sailing for the St. Lawrence.

It was not Wolfe's first visit to Canada. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle having been broken, the summer of 1758 had seen the fortress of Louisbourg once more invested by a strong force under Amherst and Wolfe, with a well-equipped fleet in conjunction, and attacked both by land and sea the defence had proved no less spirited than on the first occasion. Unable to sustain their part any longer, the garrison had thrown down their arms with tears of mortification, and been sent prisoners to England. It was now seventy years since the first attacks on Albany, Salmon Falls, and elsewhere, devised and carried out from Canada, had occurred, and the British Ministry was determined to end the long and demoralising war.

James Wolfe belonged to a military family. His father, Major-General Wolfe, had won some distinction in Europe, and an uncle was also known in the service. The future hero and his only brother, as children, had imbibed everything military with avidity, dreaming but of wars and



manœuvres, and as the former grew up his talents developed greatly along that line. He seemed absolutely devoid of fear, and was dashing and headlong in his gallantry. Combined with these qualities were enthusiastic devotion to duty and a knowledge of detail that won him the position of adjutant of his regiment in Flanders at the early age of sixteen. In his own estimation, as confided to his mother, Wolfe was endowed with but moderate abilities, aided by close application to study; but to the commonplace leader of the former Ministry he was a hopeless enigma, if not worse. With ill-concealed animosity, the Duke of Newcastle had even gone so far in the old king's hearing as to dub Pitt's new general mad.

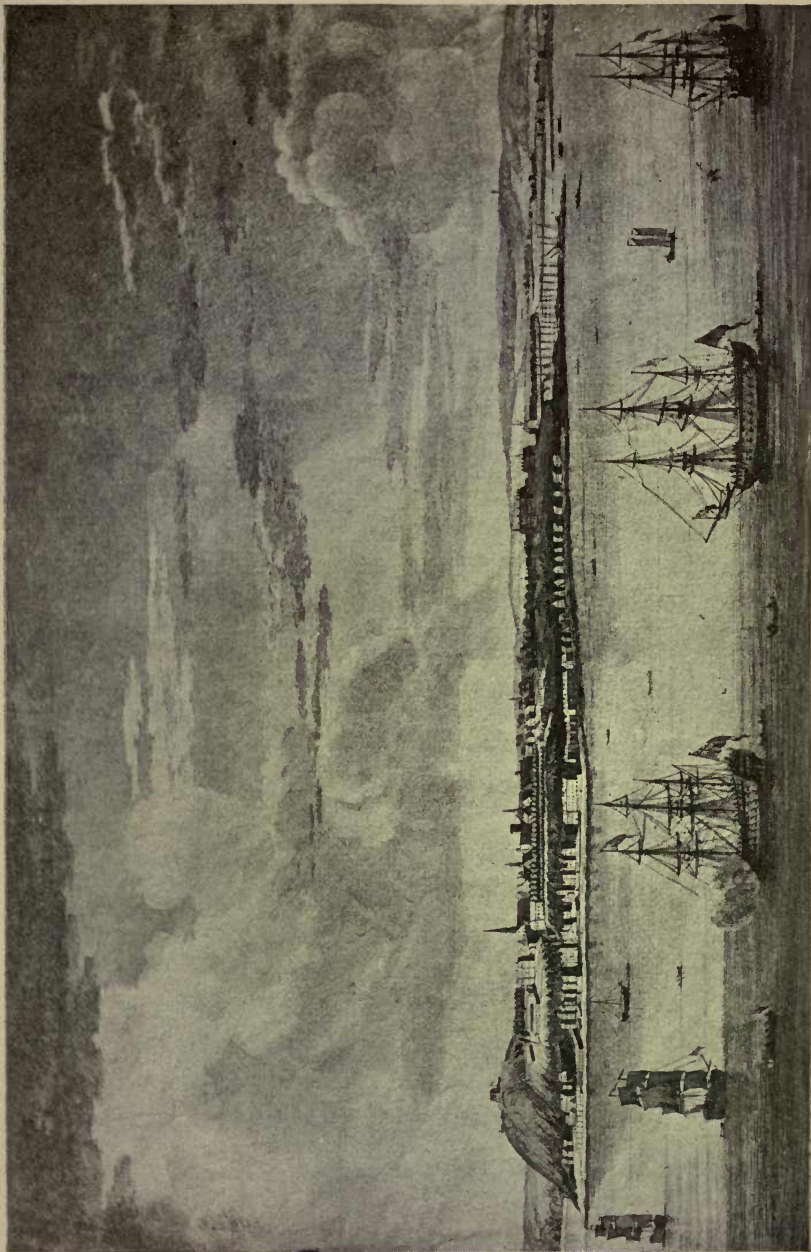
"Mad is he?" rejoined George II. pointedly; "then I hope he will bite some others of my generals!"

Like Nelson many years afterwards, the young officer had the gift of sympathy and self-forgetfulness, that won for him the esteem of his equals and the affection of his men, while he was inclined to be something of a philosopher, when he had time. To his parents he was always a dutiful son, and his tender affection for his mother, revealed in many confidential

letters, show him in a light that his after glory cannot eclipse. His youthful face, with its bright eyes, retroussé nose, and red hair tied in a queue, convey the charm of spirit that his unstudied letters always confirm.

The squadron, now exciting a lively interest in England, consisted of twenty-two ships of the line, with frigates, sloops-of-war, and a large number of transports, under the able command of Admiral Saunders. It left Spithead about the middle of February 1759, to meet in Louisbourg harbour a fleet previously despatched to embark troops for the expedition at New York. Nearing America, ten ships were told off to patrol the Lower St. Lawrence to intercept the spring fleet from France; but, as was learned later, these were already past.

The number of troops had been placed at twelve thousand, a considerable share of which remained to be made up at the rendezvous by detachments from the West Indies, New York, and Nova Scotia; but for some reason most of these additions failed to arrive. Nothing daunted, the young commander wrote to the Prime Minister, "Our troops are good, and if valour can make amends for want of numbers, we shall probably succeed." The staff consisted



QUEBEC

of the three brigadiers, Monckton, Townshend, and Murray, the first and last of whom proved true friends and capable officers throughout. In the estimation of to-day it is a small army.

From the earliest spring of 1759 the old grey town on the St. Lawrence had been in a state of commotion, if not ferment. The Citadel was no maiden fortress, but for all that had no mind to be taken peaceably. Exactly one hundred and thirty years previously she had been audaciously seized, ostensibly for the British crown, by the Kirkes, father and son, and though returned in 1633 to her rightful owners, bore no happy memory of the event. Quebec herself appeared a comparatively simple matter to defend, apart from the great extent of country, but the various approaches formed a perplexing problem. The main avenues were the war-worn path at Ticonderoga, to be held by Bourtoulamaque against encroachments from the south, while La Corne St. Luc entrenched himself among the islands at the head of the St. Lawrence rapids to keep the approach from Lake Ontario. The vast distances between these points rendered connection or even communication very difficult.

For the recruiting of the main body every exertion was made. No stone was left un-

turned, and with a patriotism that does the young colony credit, every able-bodied man, from boys of fifteen to grandfathers of eighty, joined the ranks, streaming into Quebec to join the five battalions from France, the colony troops, and militia. In all about fifteen thousand men were concentrated, with a thousand Indians ready to lend fighting powers and scalping knives to the service.

Montcalm's plan of defence lay outside the Citadel. With between one and two thousand of a garrison, under de Ramezay, the half-circular rock two hundred feet in height, outlined by the St. Charles River to the north-east, was deemed impregnable. The army, round the old Beauport house occupied by the general, was placed on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, rising from the St. Charles to the picturesque gorge of the Montmorency. The stream dividing town and camp was crossed by a barricaded bridge of boats, at its mouth further defended by a boom of logs and two armed hulks.

Spring was merging into June when fishing smacks speeding from the Lower St. Lawrence began to bring news. Ships without number were following, and dramatic tales were told of pilots seized and, with noose and yardarm in

view, compelled to steer for the detested invaders. Before the end of the month the leaders were in sight, and soon the channel below the island of Orleans was alive with vessels riding at anchor, while the troops, long imprisoned between decks, gladly felt land again beneath their feet.

From the western point of the island General Wolfe had his first view of the work he had in hand, and it was startling. Neither sketch nor plan, whose minutest detail he had by heart, could outline the massive strength of that grey rock clad in the lovely garb of summer. The narrow streets of the old stone town nestled about her foot and climbed her weathered sides, while grinning batteries of guns looked down menacingly from every elevation, and in the distance stood the heights of Cape Diamond, capped with its defences. To his right, as he turned to survey it, lay the French camp, its fair expanse covering the high-pitched shore for eight or nine miles in the direction of the Montmorency Falls, its protected position seemingly unattainable.

Two or three days passed without action on the part of the enemy, but the governor, against Montcalm's judgment, was determined not to

await the assault. The fire-ships, de Vaudreuil's pet scheme for destroying the British fleet, strained at their cables, and the night was moonless. Had their object succeeded the loss must have been inestimable. At their anchorage in the channel lay the English vessels, their lines to be traced at intervals through the gloom. The hour was late and few lights visible. No sound could be heard, save the occasional creak of a spar or the slapping of the tide against the black hulls.

Suddenly from the near distance loomed indistinct masses slowly borne onward by the current, and as they came the bewildered sentries, in doubt and darkness, saw flickers of light shooting up from them that soon revealed their direful purpose. With rapidity the flames flew up the tarred rigging and along the yards, catching from one spar to another, while from below began a series of explosions accompanied by dense volumes of smoke. Tar-barrels and pitch supplied sheets of flame that flooded earth and sky, bathing the distant town and camp in a lurid glare, while quantities of gunpowder ignited and threw aloft rockets, loaded muskets, and cannon with which the decks were stored. For an instant these seemed to poise aloft before



MONTMORENCY FALLS

descending with headlong velocity into the hissing water.

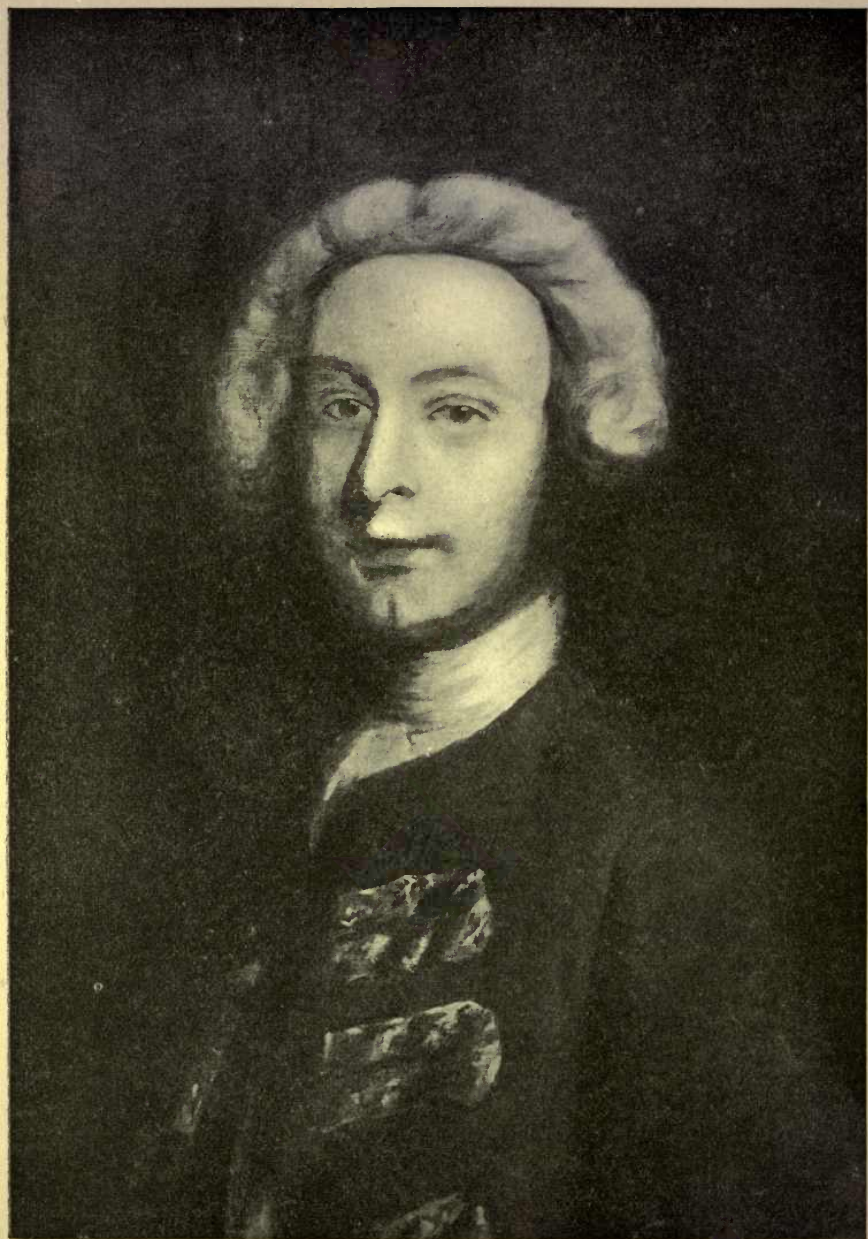
In an incredibly short time all was life and commotion. On the island, ready for any emergency, congregated the troops, while from the ships hundreds of sailors poured over into the boats. At once it seemed as if the dark surface of the water was alive with brawny crews racing towards the threatening objects in advance, and as they surrounded each weltering pyramid of flame, hurrahs greeted the successful use of their grappling-irons. For hours the extraordinary conflict lasted, and constant shouts of "All's well!" rent the air, as one and another unwieldy seething mass was drawn out of harm's way, to drift aground and harmlessly die out in sullen spurts of flame. Happily for the British, the pyrotechnic display had resulted in nothing.

The delay that followed was galling to Wolfe's energetic nature. He had come to fight, and longed to be in the thick of it, but his experienced enemy would give him no chance. Keen and full of vigilance, from his fine position he knew that Montcalm was watching his every movement. His hands seemed tied, yet "We pass every night in bivouac, or else sleep in our clothes," were his rival's significant words to

Bourlamaque at Ticonderoga, almost at the same moment.

The first brush between the forces took place a few days later, when Wolfe seized Point Levi opposite, and prepared to place some batteries with which to shell the town. It was a good position, the river at this point being scarcely a mile wide; and though the guns of the Citadel opened on them and skirmishing parties of French and Indians from the adjacent woods gave some trouble, the batteries were soon ready. From that time every day added to the growing destruction of the town. The terrified townspeople retreated to shelter, and robbers plundered the battered ruins at their leisure—yet the general on the heights was not to be drawn from his ambush.

Wolfe's next move was to bombard the heights of Beauport from the water; but here again fortune was against him, and the loss sustained very grave. To withdraw his camp from Orleans followed, and, climbing the steep bank, he entrenched himself on the east side of the Montmorency, where he was level with the enemy and at close quarters. Between rolled the narrow black flood with its terrific current, that from the edge in one leap took the two



WOLFE

hundred and fifty feet to join the St. Lawrence. From this position a considerable amount of fighting took place, in which the batteries played their part, but more still fell to the sanguinary lot of the light infantry, rangers, and Indians, who kept matters lively some miles to the rear of the camps, where a ford enabled them to cross and re-cross the river. Sometimes, as day succeeded day, the regulars took part in these forest encounters, and the Indians declared that they were learning how to fight. True it was that they were gaining insight into many strange practices. The Canadian *coureurs-du-bois*, barely recognisable in stains, bedaubed with brilliant-coloured paint, and ornamented with feathers, personated their naked allies, and both sides became expert in the hideous custom of scalping, until Wolfe ordered his men to desist, "except when the enemy are Indians, or Canadians dressed like Indians."

Quebec was fast becoming a ruin, but with the approach of autumn Wolfe seemed no nearer his object than at first. Under a flag of truce it had once been said to him: "You will demolish the town no doubt, but you will never get inside of it;" and his reply, "I will have Quebec if I stay till November,"

confident at the time, was beginning to mock him like a will-o'-the-wisp. Montcalm, keeping his own counsel, began to hope that winter would drive the enemy from the field.

In the latter part of July, however, an event sufficiently startling to the garrison took place. With a good wind, and protected from Point Levi, the ship *Sutherland* one night made a dash past the town, and was soon out of range. From that time whenever opportunity occurred others joined her, and the disquieting fact became known that the English had dragged their heavy boats across the opposite point, and launched them above the narrows. The movements were followed with distrust, but were absolutely unintelligible to the French. Even Montcalm, with the exception of placing de Bougainville with a detachment at Cap Rouge, some miles above the town, and a few troops to patrol the top of the cliff, seemed to have no great anxiety. The precipice stretching above Cape Diamond was held to be even more inaccessible than elsewhere.

At this time Wolfe himself seems to have been quite unable to fathom the future. Stung with the baffling monotony of the campaign, and the ability of his opponent, along with the



CHAIN GATE TO CITADEL, QUEBEC

vast natural strength of the position, he drew little comfort from his surroundings. Letters to the Prime Minister had already stated his unexpected difficulties, and he had not scrupled to call it "the strongest country perhaps in the world," but failure, even yet, could not be contemplated. Every part of the narrow beach with its crags towering overhead had been personally examined for the opening that would not disclose itself. Perhaps as near despair as one of his nature could be, Wolfe, examining the cliff from the south shore with his glass for the hundredth time, became aware of a barely indicated line, narrow and almost shrouded in overhanging bushes, which had hitherto escaped his notice. At the summit stood a group of tents. It could not be mere coincidence. He became convinced that there an opening of some kind existed.

Filled with renewed hope and energy, the general made more detailed examination, and discovered the dry, almost precipitous course of the *Anse du Foulon*, or Fuller's Creek, and with it the floating chimera of his brain began to take shape. Here was his chance at last—and on the successful scaling of this cliff hinged the loss or gain of Canada.

It was now early September, and already rumours of the enemy's withdrawal floated through the French ranks—rumours that their rapid succeeding movements seemed to confirm. The camp at Montmorency was abandoned, and every night saw the arrival of more men above the Citadel, where the fleet also was constantly receiving additions. The ships, now hidden by the projection of Cape Diamond from Montcalm, were kept in continual motion, and the patience of de Bougainville and his men, under orders to keep them in sight, was worn out marching back and forth along the plateau. Every night the troops on board ship took to the boats and pulled up the stream, occasionally making well-feigned but unsuccessful attempts to land. The movements, at first incongruous and perplexing, ceased to interest. Vigilance on the plateau began to be relaxed.

The eventful night to which operations had been tending arrived. It was the 12th of September. Wolfe's orders, perfect in detail, were posted on every ship. A cheerful spirit pervaded the ranks. Attack was imminent, but few knew the real point. Two lanterns in the maintop of the *Sutherland* was to be the signal.

Miles away, in the basin of Quebec, Admiral

Saunders, staunch and capable, with a great show of activity and determination as usual, bombarded the Beauport shore, concentrating all the energies of Montcalm and de Lévis, while above the Citadel the fateful movement bided its time. In darkness on the decks, or packed together in the shadowy boats below, three thousand six hundred troops held themselves in readiness for the start. Between 1 and 2 a.m. the tide began to turn, and with it a refreshing wind swept down the river. The signal went up at the masthead, and with a thrill of relief the boats stole out one after another, following their leader, with its twenty-four volunteers, all fully alive to the desperate nature of the adventure.

A sharp look-out was kept for the train of provision boats for the Beauport camp that was believed to be running the blockade that night. The expedition had good reason to hope to be mistaken for it. For two hours the cavalcade floated noiselessly down stream, borne by current and tide. The deep blue sky with its twinkling stars stretched above in endless expanse as the mysterious hours of early day crept past. Perfect silence was maintained, except in one of the forward boats, where the young general, in a

low voice full of feeling, repeated Gray's *Elegy* to the officers around him.

"Gentlemen," he said simply, "I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec."

It was an hour that those who survived it never forgot.

As they neared the appointed place the coxswains with one accord steered landwards. They were feeling their way along a few yards from shore, when there was the ominous rattle of a raised piece, and the short sharp challenge of a sentry saluted their ears:

"Qui vive?"

He had run down to the water's edge and was trying to distinguish the outline of the clustering boats.

"La France," was the instant reply. An officer of the Fraser Highlanders had answered.

"A quel régiment?"

"De la reine," returned the Highlander, adding in a lowered tone, "Provision boats. Don't speak so loud. The English will hear us," which seemed only reasonable, since the ship *Hunter* floated close by.

"Passez," responded the sentry briefly, and the boats stole on, relieved that no glimmer of dawn had yet appeared to betray their identity.



DE BOUGAINVILLE

A few moments later the headland was rounded, and the sheltered little bay now known as Wolfe's Cove reached. Quickly as the boats discharged their human freight, each man passed across the sandy beach, and on hands and knees, holding to bushes, vines, roots of trees, breathlessly and in silence began to make the ascent as best he could. Barricades there were near the top, but these were not formidable and could easily be set aside. In a short time the glimmer of coming dawn could be distinguished through the dense foliage at the top, and so silently had they come that the dash of the first up to seize the sentry, half-sleepily leaning on his musket, was the first intimation he had received of the event. Wholly surprised, the occupants of the tents were soon overpowered, and a few musket shots apprised the waiting troops of the successful ascent, whereupon a general rush from below took place, and in the grey dawn the plateau was soon alive with men. The Plains of Abraham had been reached—but could the field be kept? There was but one possibility—victory. The alternative meant annihilation.

Meanwhile the camp at Beauport had been apprised that something was wrong by the batteries on the summit, and soon men were pour-

ing over the St. Charles bridge in the direction of the Heights. On they came round the north ramparts, and through the steep narrow streets. The French regulars, La Sarre, Languedoc, Royal Rousillon, Guienne, Béarn, victors on many a well-fought field, swelled the throng, with hordes of irregulars keen for the fray, and shortly, no doubt, de Bougainville's command from Cap Rouge would appear, catching the enemy in a vice. Already Indians and *coureurs* under cover all round the field were attacking with spirit, picking off their men with the accuracy of long practice. Wolfe was everywhere, encouraging, arranging, in the enthusiasm of having accomplished something at last. Montcalm spurred backwards and forwards on his black charger. Officers galloped up and down the field, or ran hither and thither with orders. One six-pounder had been brought up the *Anse du Foulon* with incredible trouble, but none had arrived from Beauport, where, no doubt, every possible defence was reserved to protect the Lower Town; and though Montcalm urged de Ramezay for guns, only three field-pieces could be spared from the ramparts. With the rain falling in intermittent showers the lines faced each other.



DEATH OF MONTCALM

Too great haste has been laid to the French commander's charge. It is said he should have been less precipitate. But his motive seems strong enough for forcing the battle. On the Heights the ramparts were but slightly equipped, and entrenched the enemy would be still more formidable than it already was. The French regulars were arranged in the most exposed position, but they were too few in number, and later it was said no message had been received by de Bougainville until too late. By far the greatest number were Canadians, courageous but untrained, who, eager for the contact, rushed forward at the word of command, receiving the British volley at close range, all unprepared for its deadly reality. As the smoke cleared away, the French centre was seen to be full of gaping spaces, which in response to the frantic efforts of their officers the troops in vain tried to fill. Again the simultaneous fusillade of the opposite ranks sent forth its pitiless rain of lead, and as the order to charge bayonets rang through the air, and redcoat and Highlander swept forward with their bristling hedge of steel, the unhappy Canadian centre broke and fled.

To the right Wolfe himself led the charge

at the head of the Louisbourg grenadiers, and as he ran with sword extended, a shot broke his wrist. A moment, and without stopping his handkerchief was drawn from his breast and wrapped round the wound. Forward again a few steps another bullet struck him, then a third, this time near the heart. His tall, slim figure reeled, and he would have fallen had not two or three men rushed to his aid.

"Support me—support me," he gasped, "lest my brave fellows see me fall."

But the effort was only momentary. One and another hastily departed to look for a surgeon, but a little group in painful silence surrounded the form of their beloved leader, one supporting his head, while another held his fast-crimsoning handkerchief against his breast. All leaned forward to catch any sound that should fall from his lips, and each face expressed the grief that showed how little hope remained. The combatants were already a considerable distance off, and as an outburst of cheers was borne to their ears, one or two of the group excitedly sprang to their feet, exclaiming:

"They run! they run!"

With a start the closed eyes reopened, and like one roused from sleep the dying man muttered:

DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE



"Who run?"

"The enemy, sir, they give way everywhere!"

Like a flash all the old energy returned.

"Go, one of you, to Colonel Burton," was the order, keen and capable as ever, "tell him to cut off the retreat at the bridge. . . . Now, God be praised, I die in peace!"

The words were distinct, but the exertion was too great, and in a few moments the dauntless soul of James Wolfe had taken its flight.¹

In the meantime, Montcalm, still on horseback, and striving to rally his men, was borne backward among the shouting, surging ranks. Nearing the ramparts, a shot struck him in the body, and he would have fallen, had he not been supported on either side.

Desperate as was the struggling throng, a little space was formed, through which the

¹ The death of General Wolfe, at the critical moment of victory, was regarded by the troops with profound grief, resembling that felt at the similar fate of Nelson. In both cases the joy and significance of success was completely overshadowed for the time by sorrow and consternation. The event on the Plains of Abraham was embodied in numerous poetical efforts on the part of the soldiers, one of which, written in Gaelic by a sergeant of the 78th Highlanders, alluded with deep pathos to "the precious blood of the General flowing to the ground." This song is still extant, and is said to be of exceptional merit.

frightened charger was led to the gate, where among the vociferous crowd huddled a group of women. Recognising the pallid face of the sufferer, and only too well comprehending the half-fainting figure, a girl's voice rose above the din:

"Oh, mon Dieu, mon Dieu! The Marquis is killed!"

With an effort the doomed man roused himself, and looked round.

"It's nothing," he said mechanically. "Do not be troubled . . . for me . . . my good friends."

At the house of a neighbouring surgeon, it was evident the General could not long survive his wounds, and though one or two inconsiderate questions regarding subsequent events were answered, he soon refused to interfere further in earthly affairs.

"I have much business of greater moment that must be attended to," he returned calmly; but in the short time remaining his noble spirit found strength to dictate a note to Brigadier Townshend.

"Monsieur," it ran, "the humanity of the English sets my mind at peace concerning the fate of the French prisoners and the Canadians. Feel towards them as they have caused me to feel. . . . Be their protector, as I have been

their father." A few hours later, attended by the consolations of his Church, the Marquis de Montcalm breathed his last; and, far from his longed-for Manoir of Candiac, and his dearly loved wife and children, lies buried amidst the scenes of his great conflict, a man held in honour and affection by all who follow his career. Beneath the chapel floor of the Ursuline convent at Quebec, the space torn by a bursting shell formed a fitting soldier's grave. On a marble slab, fastened to the right-hand wall, the following inscription is there engraved:

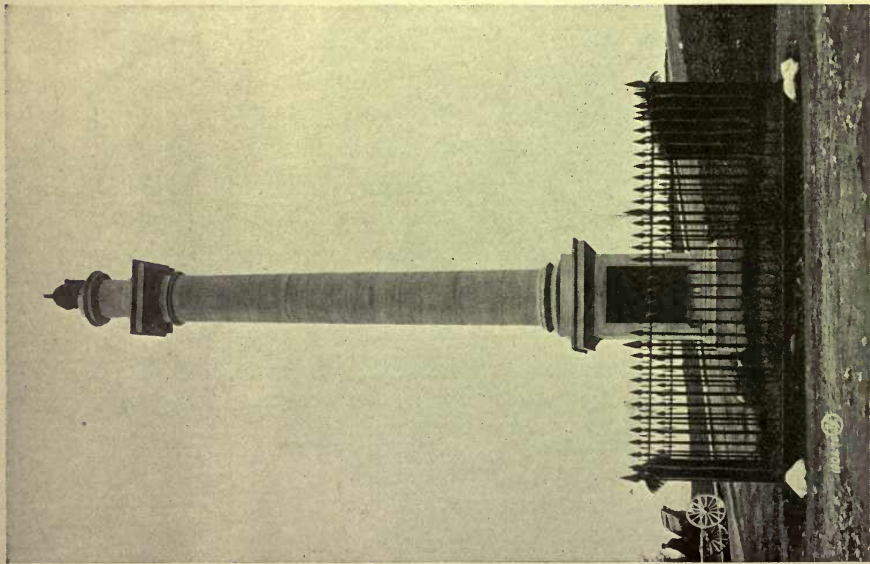
HONNEUR
À
MONTCALM.
LE DESTIN, EN LUI DÉROBANT
LA VICTOIRE,
L'A RÉCOMPENSÉ PAR
UNE MORT GLORIEUSE.

A column marks the spot where the British commander fell on the Plains of Abraham, with the simple inscription:

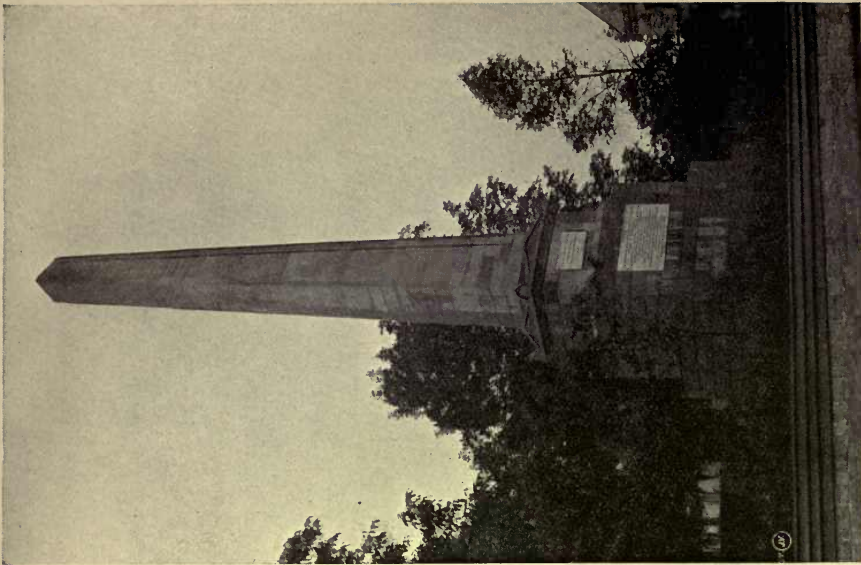
HERE DIED WOLFE
VICTORIOUS.

And among the most striking statue-groups in Westminster Abbey is that erected to his memory.

The monument to the heroes conjointly, with its Latin text, placed in the Governor's garden at Quebec after the war by Canadians of French and English descent, fully attests the pride and honour of the amalgamated races.



WOLFE'S MONUMENT, QUEBEC



MONUMENT TO WOLFE AND MONTCALM,
QUEBEC

After the Battle



HE discomfiture of the Canadians was complete. Vaudreuil, with all his vaunted ability, had lost his head, and demoralised them more than the death of the brave leader with whom they had often gone forward to victory. Now the unnerved Governor, fearing all sorts of imaginary evils for himself, could not fly fast enough or far enough, and with a disorganised mob at his heels, left the unfortunate garrison of Quebec to a fate he could not face for himself. De Ramezay, the commandant, was ordered to capitulate without waiting for the assault, and the terms to be asked were enclosed in a hasty note from the Governor at the moment of his departure.

In Quebec fierce indignation, much keener towards their own than at the enemy, prevailed. The garrison comprised but one hundred and twenty regular troops, with a few score sailors,

upon whom real dependence might be placed. The local volunteers present, though forming several companies, were untrained, half-starved, and generally over age. To complicate matters, the inhabitants who had fled during the bombardment were returning, and between three and four thousand women, children, and invalids, all more or less helpless, were to be provisioned, though, even on half rations, there was barely enough food to last a week.

At this crisis, the merchants, all militia officers, declaring themselves no longer soldiers but citizens, met at the mayor's house, and unanimously decided for capitulation, presenting a petition to that effect to the commandant. In manly terms they represented that they had not been intimidated by a siege of sixty-three days, that continuous duty and weary service had not depressed them, and if their bodily strength suffered from insufficient food, it had been revived by the hope of conquering the enemy. Neither had the loss of their property affected them. Every privation had been cheerfully endured from a desire to save the town, and since that hope had proved delusive, they deemed it not disgraceful to yield where it was impossible to conquer. In this view de



PALACE GATE, QUEBEC



ST. LOUIS GATE, QUEBEC

Ramezay's council of officers coincided, and on the fourth day the white flag was displayed on the Citadel, though with the mortified protest of a few, including de Lévis, who was present. Conditions, however, were drawn up and signed by Townshend, de Ramezay, and Admiral Saunders, favourable to the Canadians, who were to have protection of person and property, and the free exercise of their language, religion, and later much of the civil law. Under the new régime the French criminal code was held to be too severe, and was therefore abolished. Upon the signing of the articles, the British troops from the Plains defiled in order through the St. Louis Gate, and the Union Jack was run up on the Citadel. The capital of New France had passed into the hands of the victors.

In England former news had filled the public mind with gloom and apprehension. General Wolfe's last letter to the Prime Minister had been sent in a kind of resolute despair, pointing out his all but hopeless expectations. Horace Walpole, writing to his friend Mann, ambassador at Florence, faced the situation in an unusually serious frame of mind:

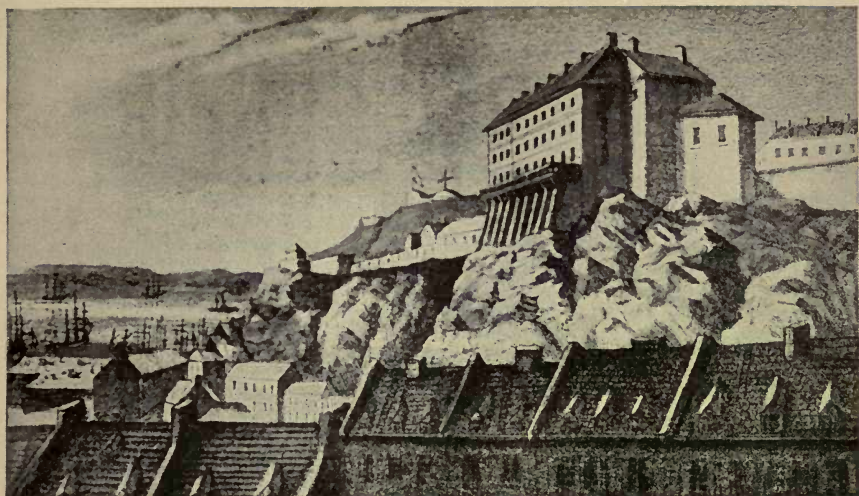
"Two days ago came letters from Wolfe, despairing as much as heroes can despair. Quebec

M

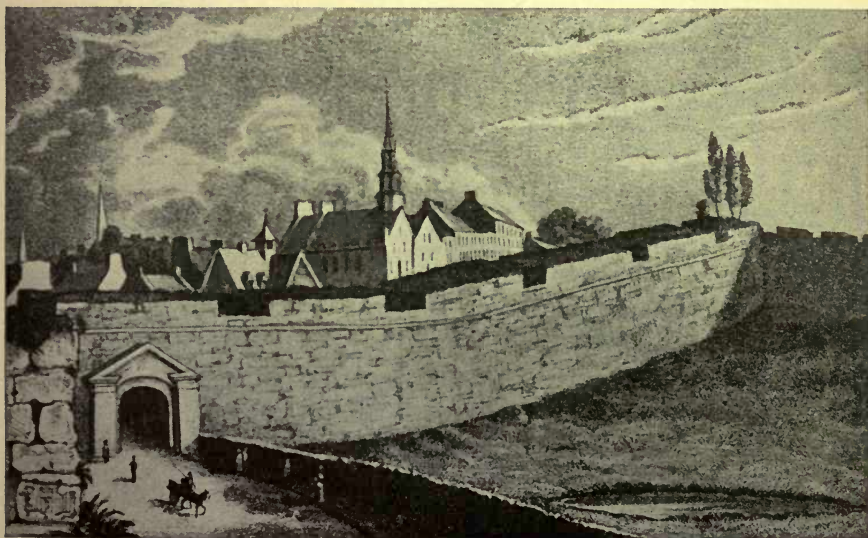
is well victualled" (so they thought), "Amherst is not arrived, and fifteen thousand men are encamped to defend it. We have lost many men by the enemy, and some by our friends; that is, we now call our nine thousand only seven thousand. How this little army will get away from a much larger, and in this season, in that country, I don't guess: yes, I do."

Scarcely had these lines reached their destination, when further despatches brought a reversal of the depressing news. Montcalm was defeated, Quebec taken, and Wolfe killed. Mixed emotions of grief and triumph swept over England, and with a packet of newspapers detailing events to Florence, Walpole gave utterance to his vivacious relief:

"You may now give yourself what airs you please," he says. "An ambassador is the only man in the world whom bullying becomes. All precedents are on your side: Persians, Greeks, Romans always insulted their neighbours when they took Quebec. Think how pert the French would have been on such an occasion! What a scene! An army in the night dragging itself up a precipice by stumps of trees to assault a town and attack an enemy strongly entrenched and double in numbers! The King is over-



CHATEAU ST. LOUIS, QUEBEC



ST. JOHN'S GATE, QUEBEC

whelmed with addresses on our victories; he will have enough to paper his palace."

Great Britain blazed with illuminations and bonfires, but in one house all was dark and silent; for here the widowed mother of the great general mourned her loving and only son.

The squadron remained in the basin of Quebec as long as the weather permitted, then departed, with the exception of the *Racehorse* and a companion frigate, bearing with it the remains of the beloved general. The half-demolished town and its garrison were left to the brilliant skies and bitter cold of the long winter. All the churches, convents, and public buildings were almost battered to pieces, and the hastily repaired dwelling-houses could scarcely be made habitable. An officer of note, quartered in a small stable, with hay-loft above, rack and manger, and a well-supplied stove, congratulated himself on his lot. The lower town was but a mass of crumbling ruins. The shells that had gone through the roof of the Recollect Church, had shattered the pavement, throwing up the skulls and bones of those long dead from the graves beneath; and from every point of view the scene was one of desolation. Writing to

General Bourlamaque in Montreal, Commissary-General Berniers says:

"Confusion, disorder, and pillage reign even among the inhabitants, and the English make examples of severity every day. Everybody rushes hither and thither, without knowing why. Each searches for his possessions, and not finding his own seizes those of other people. English and French, all is chaos alike. The inhabitants, famished and destitute, fly to the country. Never was there seen such a sight."

But the British authorities were not idle, and the passing weeks soon showed at least a semblance of order. Guard-houses were placed at every point, sentries innumerable paced the ramparts, and squads of men patrolled the streets on duty of all kinds, always under strict orders to show consideration to the townspeople. Nor could this humane policy fail to meet with a ready and friendly response. So long had the unfortunate Canadians been the half-ruined dupes of Bigot, Cadet, and their harpy crew, that any effort at honest administration was a revelation to them.

Brigadier-General Murray, son of Lord Elibank, now in command, was a capable and energetic soldier, a counterpart and contemporary

of the clansman who inspired Hogg's stirring Jacobite song:—

“Wha will ride wi' gallant Murray,
Wha will ride wi' George's sel' ?
He's the flower o' a' Glenislay,
And the darling o' Dunkel'.”

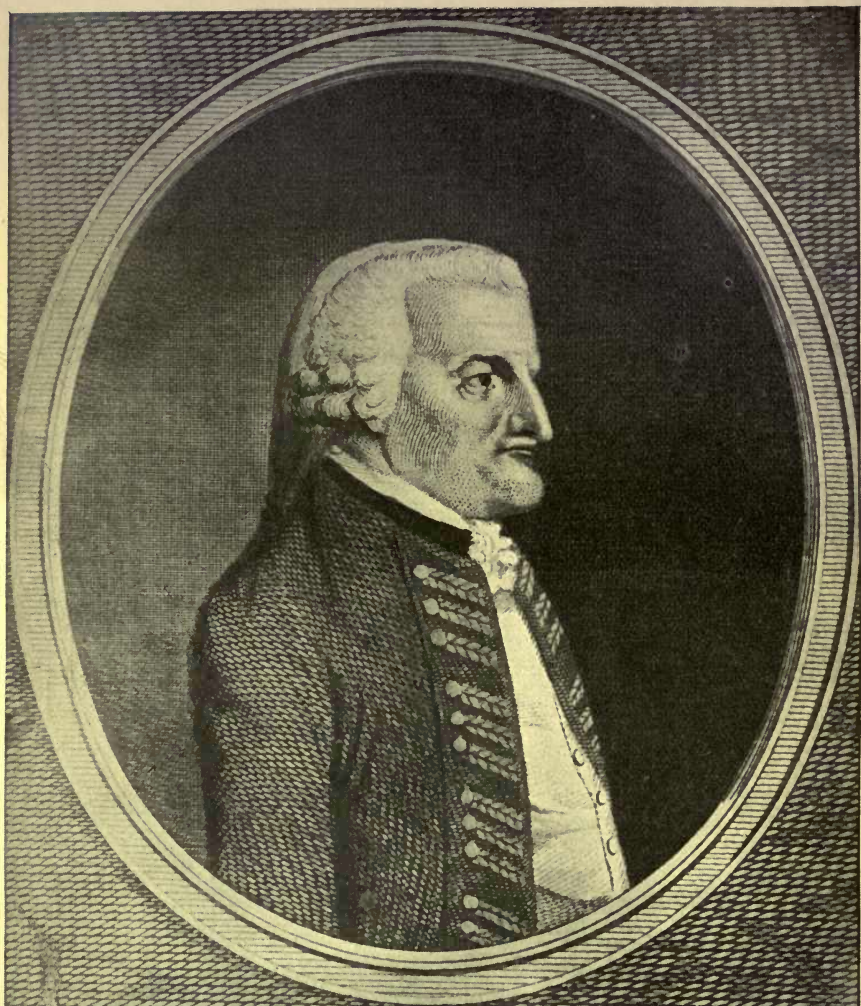
Though in a military capacity, Murray was really the first Governor of Canada; and to his humane, tactful policy, aided by a stern sense of duty, may be traced the good feeling and mutual respect so soon visible between the nationalities under his jurisdiction. Among his first highly appreciated acts was the assistance afforded by troops sent out through the surrounding districts to assist the sadly thinned ranks of the *habitants* in getting in their harvest. The Canadians were disarmed and required to take the oath of allegiance, and punishment for wrongdoing was rigorously meted out to French and English alike. Throughout his administration a generous precedent towards the conquered was established, to which the quick Celtic nature could not but respond.

A garrison diarist of the time gives pleasant glimpses of passing events that afford some relief to the accumulated trials of the passing months. He speaks with admiration of the

agreeable manners and vivacious spirit of the Canadian ladies :

"It is very surprising," he says, "with what ease the gaiety of their tempers enables them to bear misfortunes which to us would be insupportable. Families whom the calamities of war have reduced from the height of luxury to the want of common necessities, laugh, dance, and sing, comforting themselves with this reflection — *Fortune de guerre!* Their young ladies take the utmost pains to teach our officers French, with what view I know not, if it is not that they may hear themselves praised, flattered, and courted without loss of time."

It cannot be denied, however, that the suffering among the troops was terrible. Without proper clothing or shelter, and unaccustomed to the severity of the climate, their condition during the succeeding months was deplorable. Food was scarce, blankets still more so, and the only fuel (wood) had to be hewn in the surrounding forest by detachments of troops, in spite of the continual danger from prowling savages. Owing to the scarcity of beasts of burden, the logs in large quantities were removed to town by men harnessed in teams to the *traîneaux*, and, especially before becoming inured to the



GENERAL MURRAY.

weather, few escaped serious frost-bites. Military regulations were much relaxed to afford relief, and sentries were only required to remain on duty one hour instead of two, while the ready wit of emergency suggested many ingenious devices as a protection against the cold. Amidst the general privation it is painful to point to the Highland regiment in their kilts as reaching experience of a unique order; and their thankfulness to the good nuns who found time in their leisure moments to knit long woollen hose for their use was immeasurable, "though," as one of the Scots remarked with native humour, "they were at a loss to know whether the gift was inspired by modesty or charity."

All these combined trials, though endured with cheerful heroism, could not fail to cause a great deal of illness and many untimely deaths, though the active care of the hospital sisters, received with touching gratitude by the sufferers, did much to mitigate it; and altogether the winter of 1759-60 was one to be long remembered by garrison and citizens alike.

The Battle of Ste. Foye



URING the winter, in the midst of his pressing anxieties, rumours had not failed to reach General Murray from time to time, of preparations on a large scale for an attack on Quebec. Organised by the capable hand of de Lévis, Montcalm's able friend and colleague, it was hoped all the fallen fortunes of the country would yet be retrieved. Several dates were named for the attempt, and tales of scaling-ladders, arms, and provisions for fifteen thousand men, showed that the Canadians were very much on the alert.

Naturally there was a great deal of patriotic zeal among the people, and this was encouraged to its height. British authority had not as yet been exercised except in the immediate vicinity of Quebec; but the knowledge of coming events had spread throughout the country, and it may be imagined that neither without nor within the

FRANÇOIS GASTON DE LÉVIS BRIGADIER des ARMÉES du ROI de FRANCE
AU CANADA puis MARÉCHAL DE FRANCE, DUC de LÉVIS, CHEVALIER
DES ORDRES DU ROI GOUVERNEUR de la PROVINCE D'ARTOIS NÉ EN
1720 MORT EN 1787



old gates was life wanting in excitement that memorable winter.

In addition to continual vigilance in the town and Citadel, armed outposts were stationed at Ste. Foye and Lorette, and Point Levi on the south shore, where, towards spring, almost constant and very spirited skirmishing was kept up, in which the combatants drove each other out of their positions turn about, with considerable loss of life. No definite move, however, was reported until about the middle of April, when it appeared that the breaking up of the ice would be the signal for the attempt.

Upon this the French received orders to leave Quebec within three days. The order had a good effect upon the troops. The certainty that their foothold was not irrevocably won roused their spirit to a higher level than ever. Now, if not before, they felt themselves on their mettle, but it cannot be doubted that every man had reason for anxiety. Of the seven thousand troops alluded to by Walpole some months before, not above three thousand were now fit for duty.

At headquarters, in Montreal, Vaudreuil and de Lévis were working with tremendous energy and courage big with hope. They had spies

and agents everywhere, and some of King George's new-sworn subjects had already proved themselves very useful to his enemies. Still, the people in general were thoroughly tired of war, and even more so of the oppressive reign of chartered dishonesty under which they had long suffered. There was reason to hope for better government from the English; but on this point opinion was naturally divided. While some in secret called his project "Lévis' folly," a contemporary says that few ventured to say what they thought for fear of being considered traitors.

The ice was beginning to clear from the river, when the contingent left Montreal in a large number of *bateaux*. It was expected that the ranks would be largely increased during the route, as the *habitants* generally had been notified to join fully armed. Any infringement of this order was to be punished with death. Besides other very natural expectations, hope was centred about the little fleet of French men-of-war wintering on the river between Quebec and Montreal. Under the gallant Vauquelin, who had distinguished himself at Louisbourg, they were in good hands. A competent squadron from France to join these in the spring

would give the strongest backing that could be desired, and indeed, on both sides it was felt that the fate of the country now depended upon the nationality of the fleet that should arrive first.

Wolfe's plan, never before dreamed of, of attacking Quebec from the Heights, had fully vindicated itself, and this was now the order of operations in view. De Lévis landed some miles above the town, and at once began to make his way across country towards Lorette and Ste. Foye.

For some days General Murray had been expecting to march his troops out to the Plains, but the continued ravages of illness forbade him, as a careful officer, to expose his men unnecessarily to the prevalent cold weather. For the same reason entrenchments had not been commenced. A romantic incident, corroborated by the French commander, gives the manner in which, in those days of non-steam and non-electric communication, news of the precise time of attack was received in Quebec, defeating the intended surprise.

On the deck of the *Racehorse*, one of the two British frigates frozen in in the docks, so runs

the story, the early morning watch of Sunday the 27th April was startled to hear a faint cry of distress from the river, covered, at the time, with floating ice. Informing the captain, a boat was at once ordered to investigate, and following the direction of the sounds through the darkness, the sailors soon discovered a man, more dead than alive, on a section of drift ice. The unfortunate sufferer was taken to the ship with all speed, and resuscitated with great difficulty. On regaining sufficient strength, he told his preservers that he was a sergeant of artillery with the army of de Lévis, at that moment on the march to retake the Citadel. While trying to land in the darkness, he explained, the boat was capsized and all his companions lost. He himself had escaped the same fate only by climbing upon the ice, and his strange preservation might be judged from the fact that he had floated down to Orleans and back with the tide, to be picked up as they were aware. In gratitude to his rescuers, he warned them that de Lévis' force numbered twelve thousand, and must now be near its destination. The hour was 3 a.m., but naturally concerned by this news, the gunner was promptly

conveyed in a hammock to the general's quarters, there to repeat his story. As a consequence, the troops were at once ordered under arms, and soon after daybreak, Murray, with a number of guns, marched out at the head of about half the garrison.

On reaching Ste. Foye, the truth of the statement proved entirely correct. The Heights were already covered with a large number of men, who, however, did not appear anxious to push matters. A brisk fire was opened by the British guns, but only in order to cover the retreat of a small outpost in the neighbourhood; and after blowing up the church, packed with army stores, they returned to the town. Able by his investigation to judge his enemy's strength, Murray had a difficult problem before him. He might defend Quebec, but the walls were in no condition to stand a cannonade; he would have preferred to entrench himself on the Plains, but here the ground was still frost-bound, and the process would be a lengthy one. There seemed no alternative but to fight, and however great his disadvantages, the commander was sanguine and fearless. As he afterwards wrote to the Prime Minister, his little army was in

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the habit of beating its enemies, and he decided to make the venture.

Early the following morning, taking with them two howitzers and twenty field-pieces from the fortifications, the entire available force of three thousand men marched out at the St. Louis Gate.

Advancing to the left, General Murray took up his position on the very same ground occupied by Montcalm on the memorable 13th of September. On the left were two blockhouses built by his own troops the previous autumn, near the edge of the precipice that they had good reason to remember, while beyond stretched the wintry mass of Sillery Wood, its dark trees in vivid contrast to the whiteness of the snow. Between, a portion of the enemy had taken its place, and away to the right, along the Ste. Foye road, marched the main body, turning with precision at a given point, and rapidly crossing the plateau to join their comrades.

The moment to advance was auspicious, and the order was acted on with spirit, though the half-melted snow, in which the feet sank to the knee, greatly retarded progress, especially with the guns. The opening attack of the battery,

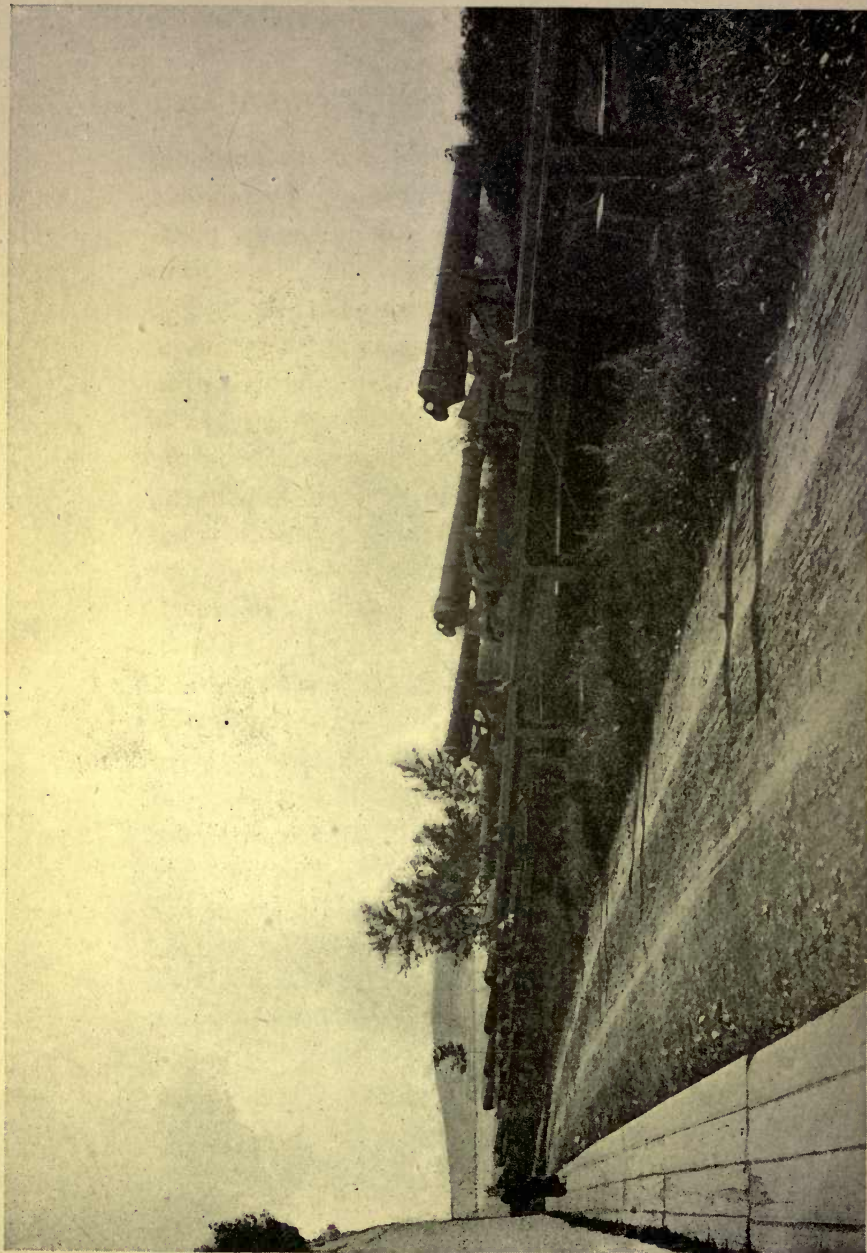
however, had such an effect upon the French lines, that de Lévis, on horseback in the middle of the field, ordered his men to fall back. This, mistaken for a retreat, caused a rash forward move of Murray's right wing under Colonel Burton, which unfortunately lost it its fine position. Across the plateau a small brook prattled through the hollow in which they found themselves, and the situation soon proved altogether unfavourable to the proper serving of the guns. A short distance off stood an old house and windmill, occupied by French grenadiers, and, unable to extricate the guns, a furious charge took place in this direction, resulting in the dislodgment of the enemy. Following up the advantage, their ambition unfortunately led them too far. A body of French, commanded by a gallant old officer, Colonel Dalquier of the Béarn regiment, issuing from the wood to the support of their comrades, drove them back with the loss of nearly all their officers, and in confusion from which they did not rally throughout the engagement.

In the meantime, the mill had been re-occupied by the French, again to be driven out by a detachment of the Fraser Highlanders; and for more than an hour the struggle surged back

and forth with a determination on both sides which showed how much was at stake.

The advance of the British left flank, commanded by Colonel Fraser of the 78th Highlanders, was no less unfortunate than the right. By it the troops were brought in contact with the enemy dashing through the woods from the French rear. As the guns from the Citadel, caught in the deep mire and snow of the hollow, ceased firing, these advanced with their three pieces of artillery, and though a detachment of the Colonial Rangers and Macdonald's Volunteers took the blockhouses with great gallantry, they were not able to hold them, but were obliged to retire with loss, among whom was Captain Macdonald killed.

For a time, under the valorous example of the officers, the British lines held their own, until the overwhelming numbers of the enemy in a desperate attack forced them to give way. At this point, the reserves, composed of the 35th and 60th Regiments, with a battalion of the Royal Americans, under Colonel Young, were ordered forward, and after successfully standing their ground for some time, were also unwillingly obliged to retire, which they did in good



GRAND BATTERY, QUEBEC

order, spiking the guns they had to abandon. The whole line retreated, though no serious attempt was made by the Canadians to interfere with them. The day was wholly their own, and French valour had vindicated itself.

Altogether the engagement lasted two hours, and was contested with a spirit and verve on both sides that gives it a foremost place in the war. The number of French engaged during the fray was fully double that of their opponents, whose artillery, on the other hand, was much superior, as was their position before they unfortunately lost it. The British loss in killed, wounded, and missing was nearly a thousand, and the French little less; while it is terrible to relate, though for the last time, that those of the former left wounded on the Plains were subsequently scalped and mutilated by the Indian allies. It may be well at this juncture to refer to the scathing denunciation on this inhuman practice delivered by General Amherst during the drawing up of the terms of capitulation, and his pointed charge that it need never have been tolerated had proper authority been exercised.

It seemed that those within the walls were

to have one more chance to hold what they had won; and though every one deplored the hard fate that had almost lost them the prize, they had nothing with which to blame themselves. Any depression affecting them soon disappeared, and all the old ardour reasserted itself. The labour of preparation within the town for the coming siege was general, and brought together all classes in a manner that inspired mutual trust and respect. Every man, regardless of rank, worked at whatever might prove of service. The officers took their share in gangs with pickaxe and spade, and were harnessed in yokes to assist in raising the cannon from the Lower Town. The ramparts on the Heights were faced with fascines, barricades placed in all exposed places, and an out-work built and mounted with guns to protect the St. Louis Gate. Embrasures were opened and equipped along the whole face of the western walls, until a hundred and forty black muzzles roared defiance at the enemy all day long. Even the recovering patients were busy filling sandbags for the defences and preparing wadding for the guns. When the French assaulted this town, said the enthusiastic de-



WOLFE'S COVE

fenders, they would find that they had caught a Tartar.

At the same time patient preparations of defence were proceeding in the enemy's lines on the Plains. The frost gave way but slowly, and harassed as they were from the ramparts, it was difficult to make headway. Bourlamaque, seriously wounded as he was, superintended the works from his bed, and the vast labour of raising guns from boats by the *Anse du Foulon* caused great delay. During these deadly preparations the courtesies of war were kept up by the rival commanders with chivalrous exactitude. Understanding that General Murray liked spruce beer for his table, de Lévis, with a complimentary message, sent him a quantity of the fragrant spruce tops, to which an equally polite message was returned with a fine Cheshire cheese, and so on; while each, with a keen eye to the main chance, looked for the coming squadron, and strove to outwit his antagonist.

The 9th of May brought the exhilarating tidings that a man-of-war under sail, of nationality unknown, could be seen slowly making her way against wind and tide, in the direction of the harbour. The news spread, and soon the

ramparts, where now stands the famed Durham Terrace, were thronged with wildly expectant faces, whose haggard outlines betrayed the want and anxiety through which they had passed. Amidst breathless silence the Union Jack was slowly hoisted to the flagpole on the Citadel, and scarcely an eye but failed with longing ere the answering signal rose to the mast-head—their own beloved and honoured British colours! The joy and excitement of the garrison knew no bounds. Officers and men mounted the ramparts, and in the very face of the enemy, with uncovered heads, hurrahed and shouted themselves hoarse, while the gunners, with never a thought of the low store of ammunition, thundered salvoes of delight until they were tired.

The *Lowestoffe* was indeed a harbinger of spring, shortly to be joined by the *Diana*, *Vanguard*, and others, who proceeded up the river to meet the remnants of the French fleet. In great agitation de Lévis received the news of his defeat. He hastened to raise the siege, and before nightfall was in full retreat.

The effort to retake Quebec was creditable in the extreme to the patriotic and high-spirited

people and their capable commander. Nor is it to be supposed that they gave in too speedily even after this blow. All through the following summer a desperate effort was made to keep alive the flagging zeal of the troops. General Murray, with the squadron and transports on their way to Montreal in August, was accompanied on each side of the river by large bodies of French-Canadians, striving to harass him as much as possible, and still entertaining vague hopes of ultimate success. But the meeting of Amherst, Haviland, and Murray united a well-organised army of great strength, and further resistance was useless.

With reckless courage and unbounded spirit on both sides, and the prize of a continent ever before their eyes, the long war had covered an intolerable burden of misery, and peace brought with it a more civilising energy and contentment than the country had ever known before. Over the passing of the old profligate kings of their race the French-Canadians had no need to shed a tear, and with the brief, meteoric glamour of Napoleon Bonaparte they had nothing to do, for he was not even a Frenchman. Without wiping out the glorious memories of the past,

either in the lands of their origin or of their adoption, French and English, here and hereafter successors and heirs of all the combined valour of the past, stand hand in hand looking forward to the splendid future of their dearly loved Canada.



MONUMENT TO THE BRAVES

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Of them thou shalt not be,
All noble ends to further
The constant care of thee;
Till in the van a leader called
Of foremost power thou'lt stand,
A people's faith, like city walled
Safe in thy honoured hand!

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